

Egyptian Dynasties

[PREDYNASTIC EGYPT](#)

[NARMER - THE SCORPION KING](#)

EARLY DYNASTIC PERIOD

[THE FIRST DYNASTY - 3050 - 2890 B.C.](#)

Menes - AHA

Djer

Wadj

Den - Udimu

Anedjob

Semerkat

Qa'a

[SECOND DYNASTY - 3890-2686 B.C.](#)

Hetepsekhemwy

Reneb

Ninetjer

Peribsen - Sekhemib

Keasekhemwy

THE OLD KINGDOM - AGE OF THE PYRAMIDS

[THIRD DYNASTY - 2650 - 2575 B.C.](#)

Sanakhte (Nebka) 2650 - 2630

Djoser - Netjerykhet 2630 - 2611

Sekhemkhet (Djoser Teti) 2611 - 2603

Khaba 2603 - 2599

Huni 2599 - 2575

[FOURTH DYNASTY - 2575 - 2467 B.C.](#)

Snefru 2575 - 2551

Khufu (Cheops) 2551 - 2528

Djedefre 2528 - 2520

Khafre (Chephren) 2520 - 2494

Menkaure (Mycerinus) 2490 - 2472

Shepseskaf 2472 - 2467

[FIFTH DYNASTY - 2465 - 2345 B.C.](#)

Userkaf 2465 - 2458

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Sahure 2458 - 2446
Neferirkare Kakai 2477-2467
Shepseskare Ini 2426 - 2419
Neferefre 2419 - 2416
Niuserre Izi 2453 - 2422
Menkauhor 2422 - 2414
Djedkare Izezi 2388 - 2356
Unas 2375-2345

SIXTH DYNASTY - 2345 - 2184 B.C.

Teti 2345 - 2333
Pepy I (Meryre) 2332 - 2283
Merenre Nemtyemzaf 2283 2278
Pepy II (Neferkare) 2278 - 2184

FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD

SEVENTH - TENTH DYNASTIES - 2150 - 1986 B.C.

SEVENTH & EIGHTH DYNASTIES

Netrikare
Menkare
Neferkare II
Neferkare III
Djedkare II
Neferkare IV
Merenhor
Menkamin I
Nikare
Neferkare V
Neferkahor
Neferkare VI
Neferkamin II
Ibi I
Neferkaure
Neferkauhor
Neferirkare II
Wadjkare
Sekhemkare
Iti
Imhotep
Isu
Iytenu

NINETH & TENTH DYNASTIES

Neferkare
several kings named Kheti
Meri-Hathor (?)
Merikare

MIDDLE KINGDOM

ELEVENTH DYNASTY

Antef I
Antef II
Antef III
Mentuhotep II 2055 -2004
Mentuhotep III (Sankhkare) 2004 - 1992
Mentuhotep IV (Nebtawyre) 1992 - 1987

TWELFTH DYNASTIES

Amenemhet I (Sehetepibre) 1991 - 1962
Senusret I (Kheperkare) 1956 - 1911
Amenemhet II (Nubkaure) 1911 - 1877
Senusret II (Khakheperre) 1877 - 1870
Senusret III (Khakaure) 1836 - 1817
Amenemhet III (Nimaatre) 1817 - 1772
Amenemhet IV (Maakherure) 1772 - 1763
Neferusobek (Sobekkare) 1763 - 1759

SECOND INTERMEDIATE PERIOD

THIRTEENTH - SEVENTEENTH DYNASTIES

THIRTEENTH DYNASTY

Wegaf 1783-1779
Amenemhat-senebef
Sekhemre-khutawi
Amenemhat V
Sehetepibre I
Iufni
Amenemhat VI
Semenkare
Sehetepibre II
Sewadjkare
Nedjemibre
Sobekhotep I
Reniseneb
Hor I
Amenemhat VII

Sobekhotep II
Khendjer
Imira-mesha
Antef IV
Seth
Sobekhotep III
Neferhotep I 1696 - 1686
Sihathor 1685 - 1685
Sobekhotep IV 1685 - 1678
Sobekhotep V 1678 - 1674
Iaib 1674 - 1664
Ay 1664 - 1641
Ini I
Sewadjtu
Ined
Hori
Sobekhotep VI
Dedumes I
Ibi II
Hor II
Senebmiu
Sekhanre I
Merkheperre
Merikare

FOURTEENTH DYNASTY

Nehesi
Khatire
Nebfaure
Sehabre
Meridjefare
Sewadjkare
Heribre
Sankhibre
Kanefertemre
Neferibre
Ankhkare

FIFTEENTH DYNASTY

Salitis
Bnon
Apachnan (Khian)
Apophis (Auserre Apepi)
Khamudi

SIXTEENTH DYNASTY

Anat-Her

User-anat
Semqen
Zaket
Wasa
Qar
Pepi III
Bebankh
Nebmaatre
Nikare II
Aahotepre
Aaneterire
Nubankhre
Nubuserre
Khauserre
Khamure
Jacob-Baal
Yakbam
Yoam
Amu

SEVENTEENTH DYNASTY

Antef V
Rahotep
Sobekemzaf I
Djehuti
Mentuhotep VII
Nebirau I
Nebirau II
Semenenre
Suserenre
Sobekemzaf II
Antef VI
Antef VII
Tao I (Senakhtenre)
Tao II (Sekenenre)
Kamose (Wadjkheperre)

THE NEW KINGDOM

EIGHTEENTH DYNASTY

Ahmose (Nebpehtyre) 1539 - 1514 BC
Amenhotep I (Djeserkare) 1514 - 1493 BC
Thutmose I (Akheperkare) 1493 - 1481 BC
Thutmose II (Akheperenre) 1491 - 1479 BC
[Hatshepsut](#) (Maatkare) 1473 - 1458 BC
Thutmose III (Menkheperre) 1504 - 1450 BC
Amenhotep II (Akheperure) 1427 - 1392 BC
Thutmose IV (Menkheperure) 1419 - 1386 BC

Amenhotep III (Nebmaatre) 1382 - 1344 BC
Amenhotep IV / [Akhenaten 1350 - 1334 BC](#)
Smenkhkare (Ankhkheperure) 1336-1334 BC
Tutankhamun (Nebkheperure) 1334 - 1325 - [King Tut](#) BC
Ay (Kheperkheperure) 1325 - 1321 BC
Horemheb (Djeserkheperure) 1323 - 1295 BC

[NINETEENTH DYNASTY](#)

Ramesses I (Menpehtyre) 1295 - 1294
Seti I (Menmaatre) 1394 - 1279
Ramesses II (Usermaatreiseteprenre) 1279 - 1213
Merenptah (Baenrehotepirmaat) 1213 - 1203
Amenmesse (Menmire) 1203 - 1200
Seti II (Userkheperureseteprenre) 1200 - 1194
Siptah (Akhenreseteprenre) 1194 - 1188
Tausert (Sitmeritamun) 1185-1187

[TWENTIETH DYNASTY](#)

Setakht (Userkhauremeryamun) 1186 - 1184
Ramesses III (Usermaatremeriamun) 1184 - 1153
Ramesses IV (Hekamaatreisetepnamun) 1153 - 1147
Ramesses V (Usermaatresekheperenre) 1147 - 1143
Ramesses VI (Nebmaatremeriamun) 1143 - 1136
Ramesses VII (Usermaatreiseteprenre) 1136 - 1129
Ramesses VIII (Usermaatreakehenamun) 1129 - 1126
Ramesses IX (Neferkareseteprenre) 1126 - 1108
Ramesses X (Khepermaatreiseteprenre) 1108 - 1099
Ramesses XI (Menmaatreisetepnptah) 1099 - 1069

THIRD INTERMEDIATE PERIOD (1070-715 BC)

[TWENTY-FIRST - TWENTY-FOURTH DYNASTIES](#)

TWENTY-FIRST DYNASTY

Smedes 1070-1044
Amenemnisu 1040
Psusennes I 1040-992
Amenope 993-984
Osochor 984-978
Siamun 978-959
Psusennes II 959-945

TWENTY-SECOND DYNASTY

Shoshenq I 945-924

Osorkon I 924-909
Takelot 909--?
Shoshenq II ?--883
Osorkon II 883-855
Takelot II 860-835
Shoshenq III 835-783
Pami 783-773
Shoshenq IV 773-735
Osorkon IV 735-712

TWENTY-THIRD DYNASTY

Pedubaste I 828-803
Osorkon IV 777-749
Peftjauwybast 740-725

TWENTY-FOURTH DYNASTY

Shepsesre Tefnakht I 725-720 Wahkare Bakenranef 720-715

LATE KINGDOM

[TWENTY-FIFTH DYNASTY](#)

Piye 747-716 BC
Shebaka 712-698
Shebitku 698-690
Taharqa 690-664
Tantamani 664-657

[TWENTY-SIXTH DYNASTY](#)

Psammetichus I (Psam-tik) 664-610
Nekau (Necho) II 610-595
Psammetichus II 595-589
Apries 589-570
Amasis 570-526
Psammetichus III 526-525

[TWENTY-SEVENTH DYNASTY](#)

Cambyes 525-522
Darius I 521-486
Xerxes I 486-466
Artaxerxes I 465-424
Darius II 424-404

[TWENTY-EIGHTH DYNASTY](#)

Amyrtaios 404-399

[TWENTY-NINETH DYNASTY](#)

Nepherites I 399-393

Psammuthis 393

Hakorisi 393-380

Nepherites II 380

[THIRTIETH DYNASTY](#)

Nectanebo I 380-362

Teos 365-360

Nectanebo II 360-343

SECOND PERSIAN PERIOD (343-332 B.C.)

[THIRTY-FIRST DYNASTY](#)

Ochus (Artaxerxes III) 343-338

Arses 338-336

Darius III Codomannus 335-332

GRECO-ROMAN PERIOD (332 B.C. - 395 A.D.)

[Macedonian Kings - Alexandria](#)

Alexander the Great 332-323

Philip Arrhidaeus 323-316

Alexander IV 316-304

[Ptolemaic Dynasty](#)

Ptolemy I Soter I 323-285

Ptolemy II Philadelphus 282-246

Ptolemy III Euergeter I 246-222

Ptolemy IV Philopator 222-205

Ptolemy V Epiphanes 205-180

Ptolemy VI Philometor 180-164 & 163-145

Ptolemy VII Neos Philopator 145

Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II 170-163 & 145-116

Cleopatra III & Ptolemy IX Soter II 116-107 & 88-80

Cleopatra III & Ptolemy X Alexander I 107-88

Cleopatra Berenice 81-80

Ptolemy XI Alexander II 80

Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysos 80-58 & 55-51
Berenice IV 58-55

Cleopatra VII

Cleopatra VII & Ptolemy XIII 51-47
Cleopatra & Ptolemy XIV 47-44
Cleopatra VII & Ptolemy XV Cesarion 44-30

Roman Emperors

Augustus 30 B.C. - 14 A.D.
Tiberius 14-37
Gaius Caligula 37-41
Claudius 41-54
Nero 54-68
Galba 68-69
Vespasianus 69-79
Titus 79-81
Domitianus 81-96
Nerva 96-98
Trajanus 98-117
Hadrianus 117-138
Antoninus Pius 138-161
Marcus Aurelius 161-180
Lucius Verrus
Commodus 180-192
Septimus Severus 193-211
Caracalla 198-217
Geta 209-212

Predynastic Egypt

The Predynastic Period of Egypt (prior to 3100 BC) is the period that culminates in the rise of the Old Kingdom and the first of the thirty dynasties based on royal residences, by which Egyptologists divide the history of pharaonic civilization using a schedule laid out first by Manetho's *Aegyptiaca*. The structure of the nomes, into which Egypt was divided, predates the First Dynasty, and there are inscriptions of pre-dynastic kings such as Narmer. Early excavations of pre-dynastic sites were pursued in the 19th century at Naqada, Abydos, Coptos, and Hierakonpolis. While many authorities begin this prehistoric period with the Naqada culture, others place its beginnings in the Lower Paleolithic.

Late Neolithic

Anthropological and archaeological evidence both indicate a grain-grinding Neolithic culture farming along the Nile in the 10th millennium BC using the world's earliest known type of sickle blades (Sources needed). But another culture of hunters, fishers and gathering peoples using stone tools replaced them.

Late Lower Paleolithic

Evidence indicates human habitation in the southwestern corner of Egypt, near the Sudan border, before 8000 BC. Climate changes and/or overgrazing around 8000 BC began to desiccate the pastoral lands of Egypt, eventually forming the Sahara (c. 2500 BC), and early tribes naturally migrated to the Nile river where they developed a settled agricultural economy and more centralized society.

There is evidence of pastoralism and cultivation of cereals in the East Sahara in the 7th millennium BC.

Domesticated animals had already been imported from Asia between 7500 BC and 4000 BC. Interestingly, the domestication of the pig in the Sahara and ancient Egypt has been cited as a likely primary contributor to the desertification of the Sahara.

The earliest known artwork of ships in ancient Egypt dates to 6000 BCE.

6th millennium BC

By 6,000 BC predynastic Egyptians in the southwestern corner of Egypt were herding cattle and constructing large buildings.

Subsistence in organized and permanent settlements in ancient Egypt by the middle of the 6th millennium BC centered predominantly on cereal and animal agriculture: cattle, goats, pigs and sheep.

Metal objects replaced prior ones of stone.

Tanning animal skins, pottery and weaving are commonplace in this era also.

There are indications of seasonal or only temporary occupation of the Al Fayyum in the 6th millennium BC, with food activities centering on fishing, hunting and food-gathering.

Stone arrowheads, knives and scrapers are common.

Burial items in this era include pottery, jewelry, farming and hunting equipment, and assorted foods including dried meat and fruit . The dead are buried facing due west.

Baskets of exceedingly high quality date to circa 5000 BC.

5th millennium BC

Items dating to this era of the Al Fayyum (5200 BC-4000 BC) include: axes of basalt, dolerite and limestone; a diorite mace head; dolerite vase; a wooden sickle and sickle blades; arrowheads; stone palettes and grain rubbers; silos; dishes, cups, bowls and pots; as well as beads of amazonite (feldspar).

The Badarian way of life centered mostly on agriculture, fishing and animal husbandry (see Badarian). Foreign artifacts indicate distant contacts as far away as Syria.

Furniture, tableware, decorated pots and vases, combs and figurines all appear around this time.

Social stratification has been inferred from the burying of more prosperous members of the community in a different part of the cemetery.

Around 4500 BC the Naqada culture begins, with geometric, human- and animal-shaped designs adorning pottery, both carved and painted.

Shapes of vessels become specialized depending on function.

Models of rectangular houses (included in grave goods) also appear in this era.

A finely woven linen fragment in the Al Fayyum dates to 4400 BC.

By 4000 BC we have evidence of pre-dynastic alchemists having invented the use of mortar (masonry) via one of the oldest known of chemical reactions.

4th millennium BC

By 4000 BC human, animal, and other designs on pottery become more realistic [23]. Tomb-building appears in the Gerzean culture, including underground rooms with furniture and amulets.

Gerzean practices would later evolve into the Osiris cult of ancient Egypt.

Symbols on Gerzean pottery resemble traditional hieroglyph writing.

By the beginning of the 4th millennium BC, ancient Egyptians in Maadi were importing numerous items of pottery from south Naqada and Canaan.

The economy of Maadi seems to have centered on metallurgy and foreign trade.

Many vessels made of black basalt also appear at this time.

There is evidence of the use of wooden posts in Maadi, maybe for buildings and/or fences. Also found are fire places and pits.

The earliest known buildings of stone to appear in ancient Egypt date to this era in Maadi, including one subterranean building that was constructed by covering walls of stone with Nile mud, another building that's entrance seems to have been fashioned by carving the local bedrock, and other building designs which also reveal distant southern Canaanite contact.

Lapis lazuli was being traded from its only known source in the ancient world Badakshan, in what is now northeastern Afghanistan as far as Mesopotamia and Egypt by the second half of the 4th millennium BC. There is evidence that ancient Egyptian explorers may have originally cleared and protected some branches of the Silk Road.

Between 1979 and 1985, charcoal samples found in the tombs of Nekhen, which were dated to the Naqada I and II periods, were identified as cedar from Lebanon.

Narmer



Narmer (Ancient Egyptian - "Striker") was an Egyptian pharaoh who ruled in the 32nd century BC. Thought to be the successor to the pre-dynastic Serket, he is considered by some to be the founder of the First dynasty. It is thought by many archaeologists that Serket is actually identical with Narmer.

Narmer's name is represented phonetically by the hieroglyphic symbol for a catfish (n'r) and that of a chisel (mr). Other modern variants of his name include "Narmeru" or "Merunar", but convention uses "Narmer". Like other First Dynasty Kings, his name is a single word ("The Striker") and may be shorthand for "Horus is the Striker".



Narmer's Palette

The southern king Narmer (perhaps the legendary Menes) wins a victory over the northern king which is immortalized by Narmer's Palette. The famous Narmer Palette, discovered in 1898 in Hierakonpolis, shows Narmer displaying the insignia of both Upper and Lower Egypt, giving rise to the theory that he unified the two kingdoms. Traditionally, Menes is credited with that unification, and he is listed as being the first pharaoh in Manetho's list of kings, so this find has caused some controversy.

Some Egyptologists hold that Menes and Narmer are in fact the same person; some hold that Menes is the same person with Horus Akha (aka. Hor-Aha) and he inherited an already-unified Egypt from Narmer; others hold that Narmer began the process of unification but either did not succeed or succeeded only partially, leaving it to Menes to complete.

Another equally plausible theory is that Narmer was an immediate successor to the king who did manage to unify Egypt (perhaps the King Scorpion whose name was found on a macehead also discovered in Hierakonpolis), and adopted symbols of unification that had already been in use perhaps for a generation. It should be noted that while there is extensive physical evidence of there being a pharaoh named Narmer, so far there is no evidence other than Manetho's list and from legend for a pharaoh called Menes. The King Lists recently found in Den's and Qa'a's tombs both list Narmer as the founder of their dynasty.

His wife is thought to have been Neithhotep A, a princess of northern Egypt. Inscriptions bearing her name were found in tombs belonging to Narmer's immediate successors Hor-Aha and Djer, implying either that she was the mother or wife of Hor-Aha.

His tomb is thought to have been comprised of two joined chambers (B17 and B18) found in the Umm el-Qa'ab region of Abydos.

During the summer of 1994, excavators from the Nahal Tillah expedition in southern Israel discovered an incised ceramic shard with the serekh sign of Narmer, the same individual whose ceremonial slate palette was found by James E. Quibell in Upper Egypt. The inscription was found on a large circular platform, possibly the foundations of a storage silo on the Halif Terrace. Dated to ca. 3000 BC, mineralogical studies of the shard conclude that it is a fragment of a wine jar which was imported from the Nile valley to Israel some 5000 years ago.

The name Narmer has been found all over Egypt including the local vicinities of Tarkhan to the South of Memphis, the Helwan cemeteries excavated by Zaki Y. Saad, immediately to the East and in the subterranean eastern shaft of Djoser's Step pyramid complex at Saqqara. Obviously he was remembered with some reverence in the area. Perhaps when the earliest site of the Capital is finally located (possibly to the North West) we will be in a much better position to evaluate Narmer's role with Memphis or Inbw hdj as it was then known.

Writing was fairly widespread during this period and although hundred of wooden and ivory labels have been found engraved with hieroglyphs little is known of the individual signs, for example ; the serech of Aha above is thought to feature mud brick paneling (early Palace facade) topped by an unknown structure with a curved roof. From a modern point of view this might seem to refer to the royal aviaries of Aha, where the mace or fighting stick substitutes for a perch and the arched hieroglyph a "pigeon hole" for the Pelegrine falcon to enter.

The arched hieroglyph however is more likely to be derived from the earlier roof shape which makes up the national shrine of lower Egypt which is partly seen on the 'macehead of King Scorpion'. Something quite similar in design to the Aha hieroglyph (a protected enclosure for a female) is also seen on the macehead of Narmer. The shape is also to be seen in the plant like form below.



The Mace Head of King Scorpion

The ritual mace head of 'Scorpion' is one of the rare artefacts to have survived from this king's reign, and is one of the oldest Egyptian works of art. It is a rounded piece of limestone, shaped like the head of a mace of 25 cm. high. Its dimensions and the fact that it is decorated both show that it was intended as a ritual artefact and not as a real mace head. The mace head was found by archaeologists Quibell and Green during their expedition of 1897/98 in the main deposit at Hierakonpolis. This main deposit also contained other artefacts from the Pre-dynastic and Early Dynastic Periods, among them a long narrow vase also showing the name of king 'Scorpion', as well as, perhaps, the Narmer Palette. It is now on display at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford.



Note the Scorpion near the King.

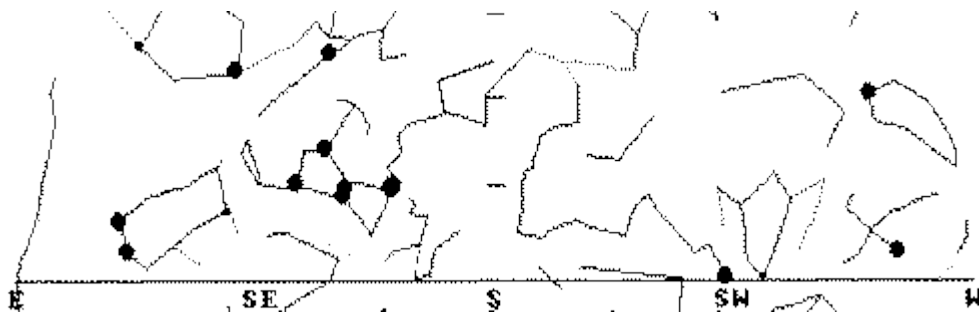
No one is quite sure who united Egypt.

Information about the first dynasty is very sketchy.

The Celestial Sphinx, a Sumerian Cylinder-seal and the Place of Purification

The Sun is Risen at the Place of Purification

The original sky chart of the remote Ancient Egyptians, dating back to 11:57pm July 3rd 14000 BCE and encoding their Sacred Knowledge, was not altogether lost as the millennia slipped by almost unnoticed. As we have already discovered it was incorporated into the Narmer Plate in 4468 B.C.



The original sky chart of the remote Ancient Egyptians, dating back to 11:57pm July 3rd 14,000 BCE and encoding their Sacred Knowledge.

More than two thousand years later, in 2308 BCE, the Sumerians developed their equivalent of the 11:57pm July 3rd 14,000 BCE sky chart and Narmer Plate combined. It comes in the form of a royal cylinder-seal depicting "The Sun is Risen". The purpose of the seal is to celebrate the Dawn of the Age of Aries. Perhaps not surprisingly it comes complete with Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs.

In linking the seal with the Ancient Egyptian 11:57pm July 3rd 14,000 BCE sky chart the following need to be accounted for: the Celestial Sphinx and the Rising Sun, together with the Constellations of Orion, Gemini, Phoenix, and Grus. There are two other constellations on the sky chart, those of Taurus and Piscis Austrinus.



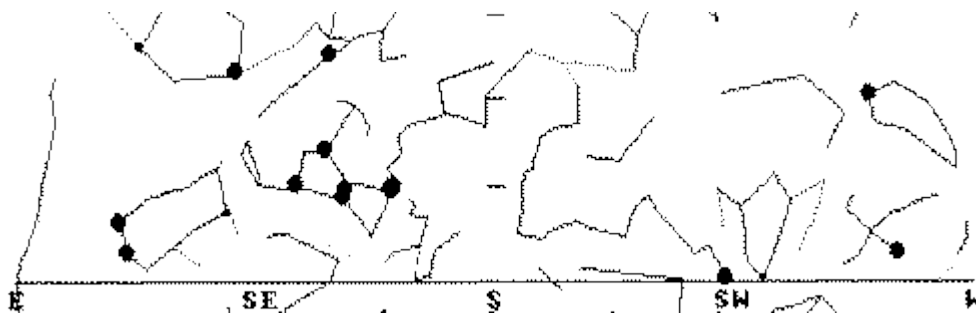
The Sumerian equivalent of 11:57pm July 3rd 14000BCE sky chart and the Narmer Plate combined. A royal cylinder-seal depicting "The Sun is Risen", complete with Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs. It is dated to 2308 BCE and celebrates the Dawn of the Age of Aries.

Moreover, in linking the seal with the Narmer Plate the following need to be additionally accounted for: the Constellation of Canis Major, the hieroglyph for the horizon and, most importantly, Precession of the Ages of the Zodiac; the Sun moving out of one Age and into the next.

Central to the scene is the Rising-Sun, Shamash. The Risen-Sun is depicted as both the circle above Shamash's hat (the Sumerian equivalent of the Taurean Red Crown of Ancient Egypt) and the figure with outstretched wings, the Constellation of Phoenix which symbolizes Rebirth / Resurrection: the rebirth / resurrection of the Sun in a New Age of the Zodiac.

The bird with the twig in its beak, which is also recorded on the Narmer Plate, is the Constellation of Grus, the Crane. The twig and the long neck of the crane are interchangeable. This constellation is in the shape of a Cross, which symbolizes Precession. The crane was the pictogram for astronomers in Ancient Egypt.

The knife which Shamash is wielding is the Constellation of Piscis Austrinus, which hangs in the West above the Constellation of Grus in the night sky as viewed from Giza at 11:57pm July 3rd 14000BCE. This is symbolically the implement used in the Opening of the Mouth Ceremony Jb the Opening of the Way or Portal for the Sun to pass through into the next Age of the Zodiac.



The hieroglyph used for the mountain, or horizon on the cylinder-seal is an Ancient Egyptian hieroglyph, the same as appears on the Narmer Plate. On the cylinder-seal however the mountain is covered in either waves denoting water, or feathers denoting birds' wings.



The Ancient Egyptian hieroglyph for Mound or Horizon. It is a tri-partite symbol encoding the Sacred Mound, the Waters of Nun, and the Winged Disk. In the centre

of the Winged Disk is the Sun passing through the Portal, Opening or Birth Canal into the next Age of the Zodiac - which is a concise description of the event portrayed on the roller seal.



The Winged disk

The figure with one foot on the Sacred Mound is the god Ea, the Sumerian equivalent of the Ancient Egyptian concept of the Sacred Waters of Nun. His prominent nose sets him apart from the others as being an introduced figure.



The god Ea is the Sumerian equivalent of the Celestial Sphinx!

Ea is a new concept which combines the Constellation of Orion, and the Sacred Waters of Nun as the Constellation of Eridanus, fanning out behind him like a pair of wings. In effect the god Ea is the Sumerian equivalent of the Celestial Sphinx! Ea was later adapted into the figures of Moses and John the Baptist. Jesus is the Risen Sun/Son baptized in the waters of the sacred Waters of Nun.

Ea's association with Nemer/Orion, is evidenced by the Constellation of Lepus the Hare at his feet. Clearly, by 2308 BCE Lepus had lost its Ancient Egyptian association with Orion's Chair, the Throne of God.



Ea's association with Narmur/Orion, is evidenced by the Constellation of Lepus the Hare at his feet.

Moreover Ea can be compared with Narmur/Orion on the Narmur Stele, which is also dated to 2308 BCE. Both Ea and Narmur are positioned with one foot on the Mound.



Ea can be compared with Narmur/Orion on the Narmur Stele, which is also dated to 2308 BCE. Both are positioned with one foot on the Mound.

Meanwhile another very bewildered Narmur/Orion, complete with bull's ear, stands next to the Tree of Life (the Axis Munde) on the cylinder-seal. He was necessary to maintain balance both on the seal and on the sky chart. Like Narmur he is wearing a very large overlay to cover his Taurean virility.

It is noticeable however that he is no longer attended by the King of the Seven Stars, Sirius. Rather he is accompanied by his dog, the Constellation of Canis Major. This indicates that the transformation of the symbolism of the constellation of Canis Major from person to dog had occurred by 2308 BCE.



Orion is accompanied by his dog, the Constellation of Canis Major.

The figure at our far right, representing the Gemini Twins, is looking back to the past and forward to the future. Remember it is a cylinder-seal and as such conveys Cycles of Time repeated into Eternity when twirled around and around in the hand. The past and the future are one and the same.

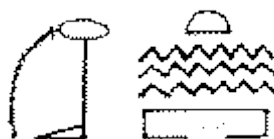


The Gemini Twins
The past and the future are one and the same.

Despite this cylinder seal being dated to the beginning of the Age of Aries, the Ram, there is no evidence of a ram on the cylinder-seal. Either the dating of the seal is incorrect or the content of the Nerner Plate 4468 BCE and the night sky as viewed from Giza 11:57pm July 3rd 14000 BCE have been adapted by the Sumerians to symbolize Precession of the Ages in general.

I have translated the hieroglyphs of the descriptive title on this Sumerian cylinder-seal as 'The Place of Purification.' The Sun is Purified, or Baptized, in the waters of Nun before it is reborn/resurrected into the New Age of the Zodiac.

The Sumerian hieroglyphs, which evidence the development of writing from Ancient Egyptian to Sumerian hieroglyphs, are written in two different styles.



Abt - Place of Purification - Ancient Egyptian



Sumerian Place of Purification

The bottom and earlier form is directly derived from the Ancient Egyptian original: "abt", which translates as "Place of Purification". The glyphs on the right of the Sumerian writing represent the human ritual of the "Opening of the Mouth Ceremony" while those on the left represent the celestial ritual of the 'Opening of the Mouth Ceremony'; the Sun passing through the Portal into a New Age.

The upper form is a later development still. The glyphs have become more stylized. The "leg" glyph of Osiris/Orion has adopted the two triangles which form the arms of Orion in the cylinder-seal as his identification tag. (Compare this to the Orion tag on the Kish Tablet in Part 12) The long neck is his beard and the square is his head. His "mouth" (which can also be interpreted as the horns of Taurus the Bull) is open ready to receive the Sun at the beginning of a New Age.

The transition has been made. The original sky chart of the remote Ancient Egyptians dating back to 11:57pm July 3rd 14,000 BCE is hardly recognisable to the untrained eye in the sky chart recorded on this Sumerian cylinder-seal.

First Dynasty - 3100 - 2890 BC

Menes, Mena, Meni, Min, Aha - The Fighting Hawk

Menes was an Egyptian pharaoh of the First dynasty, to some authors the founder of this dynasty, to others the Second. He lived ca. 3100-3000 BC, but according to some lists, ca. 3050 BC.

Ancient Egyptian legend credits a pharaoh by this name with uniting Upper and Lower Egypt into one kingdom.

[Manetho](#), a 3rd century BC Egyptian historian, called him Menes; the 5th century BC Greek historian Herodotus referred to him as Min; and two native-king lists of the 19th dynasty (13th century BC) call him Meni.

However, the discovery of the Narmer Palette in the late 19th century showing the pharaoh Narmer, possibly pre-dating Menes, wielding the unified symbols of both Upper and Lower Egypt has caused some controversy.

Some Egyptologists hold that Narmer and Menes are in fact the same person; others hold that Menes inherited an already-unified kingdom from Narmer; still others hold that Menes completed a process of unification started either unsuccessfully or only partially successfully by Narmer.

In either case, Menes is credited with the foundation of Memphis, which he established as the Egyptian capital.

It should be noted that while there is extensive archeological evidence of there being a pharaoh named Narmer, so far there is no contemporaneous archeological evidence for a pharaoh called Menes. The growing academic consensus is that Menes either refers to Narmer or, more likely, to his successor, Hor-Aha.

Another name for Menes has various spellings: Hor Aka, Hor-Aka, and Hor-Aha; Hor-Aka can be translated as "Horus of the Reeds", possibly in allusion to the legend in which Isis hid Horus in the Nile Delta among papyrus and reeds.

In Ancient Egyptian legend, there was a battle between Horus (a patron deity of Lower Egypt) and Set (patron deity of Upper Egypt).

In this mythological unification of the two Egypts, Set was defeated and the kingdom was unified under the rule of Horus, the first king of all Egypt. It is possible that this war was transformed over time into myth.

A much later parallel can be found leading to the establishment of the reign of Pharaoh Khasekhemwy several hundred years later; he crushed a civil war between the followers of Set and Horus.

According to Manetho, Menes reigned 62 years and was killed by a hippopotamus.

Reference: Kinnaer, Jacques. *What is Really Known About the Narmer Palette?*
KMT: A Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt, Spring 2004.

Hippopotamus myths and metaphors:

The Hippopotamus lives both underwater and above ground. Water is associated with the collective unconsciousness. The hippopotamus is amphibious. To be killed by a hippopotamus is to return to the source of creation.

[Amphibious Gods](#)

[Taweret](#) Goddess depicted as a pregnant hippo

Djer - Horus who Succours

Djer is the second Egyptian king of the first dynasty. He was the son of Menes and one of his lesser ranked wives, a woman named Hent.

Manetho gives him the name Athothis, or Atoti. Almost nothing is known about the life of Djer.

His name was found in an inscription on the Wadi Halfa, south of the first Cataract, proving the boundaries of his reign.

Heiroglyphs on Ivory and wood labels from Abydos and Saqqara say he reigned for 57 years.

According to Manetho, he reigned 57 years, but according to modern research (Von Beckerath's *Chronologie des pharaonischen Agypten*) his reign lasted only two years (3000 BC-2999 BC).

He probably fought several battles against the Libyans in the Nile delta.

Djer's wife was Queen Herneith.

Like his predecessor, Hor-Aha, he was buried in the holy place Abydos. Close to his grave is another, that probably belongs to his wife Herneith, mother of the later king Den, and possibly his regent during his youth.

From the Eighteenth dynasty, his tomb was revered as the Tomb of Osiris.

The evidence for Djer's existence:

- a tomb in Umm el-Qa'ab, Abydos;
 - seal prints from graves 2185 and 3471 in Saqqara;
 - inscriptions in graves 3503, 3506 and 3035 in Saqqara
-

Djet - Horus Cobra



Horus (hawk) name of Wadj
snake over palace facade

Djet, also known as Wadj, Zet and Uadji (in Greek possibly the king known as Unephes), ca. 2920 BC, was the third Egyptian king of the first dynasty. His name means serpent.

Little is known about his reign, but he has become famous because of his tomb stela. It is decorated with Djet's Horus name, and shows that the distinct Egyptian style had already become fully developed.

His stela is displayed at the Louvre in Paris. It is made of limestone carved by the sculptor Serekh. The stela was discovered near the ancient city of Abydos where Wadj's mortuary complex is located. The only other place that Egyptologists found a reference to him was in an inscription near the city of Edfu, to the south of Egypt.



His wife was Queen Mereneith, who acted as mentor and advisor for his son and successor, King Den. Queen Merenith ruled Egypt as regent when Den became king as a child. This essentially meant that she ruled Egypt until he was capable of doing

so himself. There are many scholars who think that Merenith was a ruler in her own right. Stone vessels and sealings bearing her name were found at Saqqara, as was a stela with her name written in an archaic form with crossed arrows signifying the name of Neith. Merenith has two burial sites, one at Abydos and one at Saqqara (Mastaba 3503). The Saqqara tomb contains some artifacts that show the name of a high court official called Seshemka. The Abydos burial complex is amongst those of the kings of her dynasty. A stela had her name blended with royal emblems, as did her coffin.

Den - Horus who Strikes

Den (or Dewen) was the fourth Egyptian king of the First Dynasty. He ruled Egypt for almost fifty years after Wadj.

He was an energetic and athletic person, and was known to have been artistic.

Annals mention battles against Bedouin tribes in the Sinai during his reign, which was justified by his interest in protecting the mineral resources of the peninsula.

The cult of Apis was introduced during his reign.

He figures in the Ebers papyrus as well as the Berlin medical Papyrus.

He was the first to use the title King of Upper and Lower Egypt and the first to wear the [double crown](#).

He was buried at Saqqara, even though he built his mortuary complex in Abydos. The floor of his tomb in Umm el-Qa'ab at Abydos is made of red granite, the first time in Egypt this hard stone was used as a building material.

Anedjib - Safe Is His Heart

Anedjib was the fifth king of the first dynasty. He was also known as Enezib or Andjyeb.

He kept Memphis as his capital city throughout his approximate 14 years of rule, as the exact number of years remains unknown.

Anedjib's crown carried the symbols of both Upper and Lower Egypt, a representation of the unification of the country under his power. Historians, however, doubt that Anedjib really controlled the north, due to the fact that the northern Nomes rebelled against him constantly throughout his reign.

His wife, Queen Betrest, was the mother of King Semerkhet, who was his successor. The queen provided Anedjib with legitimacy and power since she was a descendant from the Memphite royal line.

Order broke down during his reign when conflicting factions caused changes that would end this great dynasty.

Anedjib built a tomb (Tomb X) at Abydos, but it is one of the worst built and smallest of the Abydos royal tombs, measuring a mere 16.4 x 9 meters (53 3/4 x 29 1/2 feet). Interestingly, the burial chamber was constructed entirely of wood, and there were 64 graves of retainers within the area, also of low grade construction.

Another tomb which was apparently built during the reign of Anedjib is that of an official named Nebitka (tomb 3038 at Saqqara). This tomb is interesting in that it contained a mudbrick stepped structure inside the Mastaba like structure, that some Egyptologists see as a forerunner of Djoser's Step Pyramid.

Other than his tomb at Abydos, Anedjib is also attested to by seal impressions in tomb 3038 (the tomb of Nebetka) at Saqqara, in a tomb at Helwan, and also in a tomb at Abu Rawash.

Semerkheth - "Thoughtful Friend"



According to the limited information on Semerkhet, the traditional 6th king of Egypt's 1st Dynasty. He was the son of King Anedjib and Queen Betrest. The Palermo Stone says he ruled Egypt for about nine years. Manetho records his reign as 18 years, and notes that there were numerous disaster during his reign. This is probably due to the problems with his succession and predecessor, as it has been suggested that Semerkhet usurped the throne.

He destroyed the name of his predecessor, Anedjib, on a number of stone vessels, and it would seem in return, was himself omitted from the Saqqara King list.

Semerkheth was the king's Horus name, and means "Thoughtful Friend" (though Nicolas Grimal in A History of Ancient Egypt disagrees, stating that the Horus name means "companion of the gods". Grimal also tells us that his nebty name meant "he whom the two mistresses guard", a reference to Nekhbet, the vulture goddess of Nekheb (el-Kab), and Wadjet, the serpent-goddess of Pe and Dep (Buto). Grimal therefore suggests that he may have had a priestly role prior to his ascending the throne of Egypt.

His tomb is located at Abydos (Tomb U). It measures 29 x 31 meters (95 x 101 3/4 feet), which makes it considerably larger than that of his predecessor. It is also of superior quality to Anedjib's tomb. Semerkhet's tomb has a brick lined burial chamber and is surrounded by well built servants' graves. Petrie investigated Semerkhet's tomb

at Abydos, and found the entrance ramp saturated up to "three feet" deep with aromatic oil, which, after some 5,000 years, still permeated the entire tomb with scent. Archaeologists have not discovered a mastaba tomb from his reign at North Saqqara, though his predecessors seem to have mostly built tombs there as well.

Qa'a - His Arm is Raised

Most scholars believe that Qa'a was the last king of the 1st dynasty. We may also see his name as Kaa, or several other variations. Though Egyptologists often disagree on dating, our current best guess is that he lived from about 3100 to 2890 BC.

According to Manetho he reigned for about 26 years.

Information on Qa'a is limited. He is mentioned on jar sealings and two damaged stela. One of these stela he is shown wearing the White Crown of Upper Egypt and being embraced by the God Horus.

Egyptologists have also discovered the stelae of two of Qa'a's officials, Merka and Sabef. These stelae have more complex inscriptions than earlier hieroglyphics, and may have signaled an increasing sophistication in the use of this writing.

He was probably buried in Tomb Q at Abydos, where two typical royal funerary stelae bearing his name were found on the east side of the tomb. This tomb has been excavated on a number of different occasions, first by Emile Amelineau in the 1890s, then Flinders Petrie and in 1991, by Gunther Dreyer and Werner Kaiser.

The work done by this later German team revealed many small artifacts and architectural details that had been overlooked by earlier excavations. These include thirty inscribed labels that describe the delivery of oil, probably made from berries or tree resins, and probably from the Syria-Palestine area.

Seal impressions and artifacts have also been discovered in Tomb Q with the name of Hetepsekhemwy, the first pharaoh of the second dynasty. This suggests that Hetepsekhemwy completed Tomb Q, and that there was no real break between the first and second dynasties of Egypt. The change in dynasties from the first to the second was originally reported by Manetho without explanation.

We also know about four tombs in Saqqara that date to this king's reign. The lower part of two wooden statues were found in one of these tombs in a set of rooms on the north side. Some scholars believe this may have been an offering chapel, and that the mortuary temple in pyramid complexes may have evolved from this structure.

Pharaoh Bird

The pharaoh with a bird within his serek is known from only one piece of evidence, and that comes from the galleries under the step pyramid from third dynasty king Djoser at Saqqara.



This object is from a stone vessel made of schist with this king's name carved in.

His position is far from certain, but he is considered to have had a short reign at the end of the second dynasty. This estimation is made by comparing his hieroglyphs' and serek's form to those of other rulers at the time. One of them is a crude serek found in king Q6a's tomb at Abydos in 1902 and possibly showing a bird.



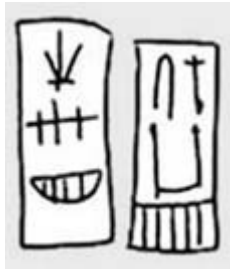
This bird looks like a stork with a long body and neck and a rather short nib, possibly a heron and the picture left shows a similar hieroglyph. His position in the sequence of kings during this rather unknown period is hard to establish with certainty.

He must not be confused with the Horus Ba from the third dynasty whose serek had a human bone, in one occasion together with an ram. (The phonetic sounds in Egyptian is similar in these names).

The reason for placing him after Q6a is mainly the epigraphically similarities (the form of the serek) and a seal from his tomb shows the seven first rulers from the first dynasty in a successive line without mentioning a king called "Bird". Accompanying text from the scanty remains of the Bird Pharaoh is almost identical to some of Q6a's, making it very likely to place him just in this era.

Sneferka

This ephemeral pharaoh belongs to the very end of the first dynasty, a period that obviously was a time of some instability in society. His name is only attested twice - both from finds in Sakkara.



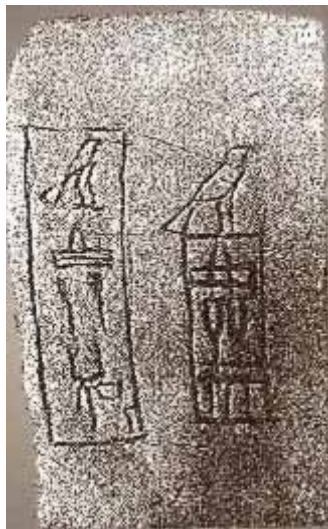
This is a fragment of schist found by British archaeologist Walter Emery in the debris at the escarpment north of King Djoser's funeral complex, when he was excavating mastabas from the first dynasty. (Emery: *Great Tombs III*, pl. 38.1).



The serek contains the three hieroglyphs making up the king's name, but in a slightly different order than in the other remain from his existence - a stone vessel found under the pyramid of king Djoser and published by Egyptologist Kaplony in MDAIK in 1988. His name is not recorded in any of the kings' lists made during the further 2,500 years the Egyptian state should exist. This can mean that he was a probably unknown to later generations due to the fact that his reign was a very short and insignificant one and the remains were very few. That's the reason why his position - together with Pharaoh Bird - cannot be established with certainty.

The Second Dynasty - 2890 -2650 BC

Hotepsekhemwy - 'Pleasing in Powers'



Inscription bearing the serekh of Hotepsekhemwy

Hotepsekhemwy, also known as Bedjau or Baunetjer, was the first king of the Second dynasty of Egypt.

His name is a reference to the gods Horus and Seth "The Two Mighty Ones at Rest".

Little is known about his reign.

Manetho gave him a reign of 38 years, though little has been found to substantiate this claim, and there is little to show for such a long reign. According to some modern sources, his reign may have lasted for 15 to 25 years, with the absolute dates being 2845 until 2825 BC.

During his era, an earthquake hit the vicinity of Bubastis in the Nile Delta.

It is possible that Pharaoh Hotepsekhemwy reached office by marriage to a princess. Thus we do not know if he was related to the old Thinite line of rulers or not.

Thinis is believed to have been an ancient Egyptian capital city in Upper Egypt. In Manetho's chronological list, Thinis is attributed to being the home of the First and Second Dynastic kings, though no proof of this has been found. The location of the ancient city of Thinis is unknown, but there is the possibility it was located near or under the modern town of Girga.

He is not thought to be the son of Pharaoh Qa'a, but possibly his son-in-law. Regardless, he made offerings in memory of the man and was possibly responsible for Qa'a's funeral. While Manetho provides no reason for the dynastic change between Qa'a and Hotepsekhemwy, it may have been the result of a shift in the royal power center to Memphis.

Evidence exists that Hotepsekhemwy probably developed somewhat subtle and reasonable changes in both religion and the administration of Egypt.

Some historians say that his brother started a military coup and threw him out of power.

Sealings with the name of "Hotepsekhemwy" have been found outside the tomb of Qa'a at Abydos.

He is named in a Greek form as Boethos and the Egyptian king lists calls him Bezau and Neter-bau. He is also attested by many inscriptions on stone vessels from the underground magazines under Djoser's pyramid. His name is also cut in to a granite statue of a long-lived priest and caretaker of his mortuary cult, who served under his two successors as well.

His tomb has been identified in Saqqara; the substructure has survived but there are no remains of a superstructure. Not only did he change place of burial - he made a totally new type of tomb with a revolutionary new design for his last resting place. It was a huge complex of underground galleries hewn out in the bedrock, a gigantic work of a type that never had been done in Egypt or anywhere else on Earth before. Indeed this was a total change and break through in the technique of stone cutting and a milestone in human progress. It was found merely by accident in 1902 a bit south of the Djoser complex by the Italian archaeologist Barsanti. In the almost empty tomb numerous seals with the king's name could be rescued, and thereby identifying the owner.

The monument seems to be in an unfinished stadium though the grave chamber and its side room were completed. Around 20 minor rooms around the king's bedroom just

might have been made for his staff of servants, but this is very hypothetical. Above ground nothing is left of a superstructure (if there ever existed one) and later buildings have been built upon it perhaps unaware of its existence.

After measuring the monument in 1902 it was closed and sealed, and it still awaits a real examination. The map drawn of its plan seem to be too symmetrical to be entirely correct.

Raneb, Nebra - Re is the Lord

Almost all Egyptologists firmly believe that a king by the name of Raneb (or Nebra) succeeded the first king of Egypt's 2nd Dynasty, Hotepsekhemwy. There is little information about Raneb, his reign is important to us because of its chronological position during the Egyptian empire's formative years. Presumably, Raneb was Hotepsekhemwy's son, or perhaps his brother, but there is little evidence to prove such. Raneb, which was probably this king's birth name, means "Re is the Lord", but many believe, because there seems to have been no specific mention of the god Re prior to this time, that it should more appropriately be read as Nebra, meaning "Lord of the Sun". There is evidence from later King lists that his birth name was probably Kakaw (or Kakau).

[Manetho](#), the great historian of ancient Egypt, believed that Raneb reigned for some 39 years. However, many modern scholars believe that his reign was much shorter, lasting between ten and nineteen years. In fact, some scholars seem to believe that Raneb's reign and that of his predecessor, Hotepsekhemwy, should together be 38 or 39 years, with both therefore having shorter reigns than provided by Manetho.

His reign is attested to by various sources, including finding from the enormous middle Saqqara tomb A (cylinder seal impressions) south of Djoser's temenos south wall and the inscription on a statuette of Redjit.



There are references to Nebra on a Memphite stela now located in the Metropolitan Museum, a statuette, and a rock graffiti near Armant in the western desert (and possibly another at site 40 in the Eastern Desert), close to an ancient trade route linking the Nile with the western Oasis.

Manetho also tells us that Raneb introduced the worship not only of the sacred goat of Mendes, but also of the sacred bull of Mnevis at the old sun-worship center of Heliopolis, and the Apis bull at Memphis. However, scholars now appear to believe that the cult of the Apis bull was established by a former king, which is attested on a stele dating from the rule of Den (Udimu). Irregardless, it would seem that his name, whether stated as Raneb or Nebra, indicates a significant shift of worship to the sun god, which would have a very important impact on much of Egypt's remaining history.



Apparently at the end of the 1st Dynasty, there was considerable rebellion, presumably problems held over from the empire's initial unification. We are told that Hotepsekhemwy reunited the two lands of Northern (Lower) and Southern (Upper) Egypt, so it follows that Raneb perhaps ruled during a period of a tentative peace. We are not certain of his burial place. 1st Dynasty kings appear to have mostly been buried at Abydos, but his seal impressions at Saqqara suggest that he could have been buried there, though there is absolutely no certainty on that matter. Regardless, future excavation may eventually reveal more to us on this interesting and important era of early Egyptian history and this relatively unknown king.

Raneb was succeeded by Ninetjer (Nynetjer), though once again, we have no real information on this latter king's relationship to Raneb.

Ninetjer - Godlike or "He Who Belongs to the God".



Ninetjer was the third king of the 2nd Dynasty. Memphis was his capitol. Ninetjer is actually by far the best attested king of the early 2nd Dynasty. Given the position of his titulary on the Palermo Stone, he must have ruled Egypt for at least thirty-five years, though Manetho gives him forty-seven. In fact, most of what we know of this king is derived from the annals recorded on the Palermo Stone, where the whole fourth register records events between his fifth or sixth year through his twentieth or twenty-first. However, the king is also evidenced by three fine tombs in the elite cemetery at North Saqqara containing sealings of Ninetjer, as well as one across the Nile in the Early Dynastic necropolis at Helwan. There were additionally five different jar-sealings of the king discovered in a large mastaba near Giza. However, more sealings of Ninetjer eventually led to the identification of the king's own tomb at Saqqara (though some scholars doubt that this is clearly his tomb).

From the Palermo Stone, we learn of the foundation of a chapel or estate named Hr-rn during the king's seventh year on the throne. Otherwise, most of the events evidenced on that record are regular ritual appearances of the king and various religious festivals. A festival of Sokar apparently was held every six years during his reign, and the running of the Apis bull was recorded twice during years nine and fifteen of his reign.

Most of the festivals recorded during his reign were held in the region of Memphis, with the exception of a ceremony associated with the goddess Nekhbet of Elkab during year nineteen. The fact that most activity associated with this king occurred in the region of Memphis may be important. Little evidence of the king is found outside of this region and it may be that his activities were largely, if not completely confined to Lower Egypt. Towards the end of his reign, there was a good deal of internal tension in Egypt, perhaps even civil war.

The Palermo Stone tantalizes us with the possibility of this beginning in Ninetjer's thirteenth year. It records the attack of several towns including one whose name means "north land" or "House of the North" (the other city was Shem-Re). Some have interpreted this entry in the Palermo Stone to mean that Ninetjer had to suppress a rebellion in Lower, or Northern Egypt.

Unfortunately, the Palermo Stone ends with the nineteenth year of his reign. However, inscriptions on stone vessels, which probably date to the latter part of his reign, appear to record several other events, such as a fourth occurrence of the Sokar Festival, which probably took place in year twenty-four, and the "seventeenth occasion of the [biennial] census", which may have occurred in his thirty-fourth year on the throne.

Other than the various inscribed stone vessels, only two other artifacts have been unearthed that bear the king's name. One of these is a small ivory vessel from the Saqqara area, but the other is a small statue of considerable significance, both to the king's history and especially Egyptian art. The statuette is made of alabaster, depicting the king on his throne and wearing the close fitting robe associated with the Sed-festival. Upon his head rests the White Crown of Lower Egypt. This crude stone statuette of unknown provenance, now in the Georges Michailides Collection, represents the earliest complete and identifiable example of three-dimensional royal statuary from Egypt.

It also provides evidence that the king celebrated at least one Sed-festival, which would have been likely given the apparent long reign of Ninetjer. While no contemporary inscriptions evidence this celebration, there was also a stock of stone vessels discovered in the Step Pyramid galleries that may have been prepared for this event. Some scholars theorize that this further evidences the difficulties late in the king's reign, suggesting that these were never distributed due to domestic unrest which disrupted communications and weakened the authority of the central administration. Hence, the stone vessels were later appropriated by subsequent kings of the late 2nd and early 3rd Dynasties.

The name of Ninetjer's successor to the throne, Peribsen (Seth-Peribsen), unusually referencing the god Seth, is another piece of evidence indicating unrest. However, it is likely that Peribsen did not directly replace Ninetjer. It is likely that as many as two or more shadowy rulers (Weneg, Sened and Nubnefer) took the throne of perhaps a divided Egypt in the interim. However, most modern kings' lists do not reference all of them, and some list only one or two.



[The Palermo Stone](#)

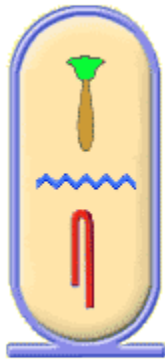
Weneg

After Ninetjer something happened to the Egyptian society that made many centralised functions collapse or decline. During this period of unrest a few names pop up on scanty fragments and among them a king called Weneg.

He was probably the pharaoh preceding Ninetjer at least in Lower Egypt, because a division of the country for a short period cannot be excluded.

The [Turin Canon](#) has an entry with an unreadable name possibly to be his with no figure of his regin but one for his age: 54 years.

His Horus-name (in a serek) is not known, but remaining form are found in a dozen inscriptions, most of them from Sakkara. Though his reign probably was a very short one (perhaps not more then a couple of years) his name is recorded in later king lists like from the temple in Abydos



and the Sakkara list.



This indicates that despite the lack of earthly remains he probably had a position in the legends for later generations, when they were commemorating the pharaohs from the passed.

The scribes at that time misread his flower-sign (to be read: WNG) and replaced it with a papyrus plant making the sound: Wadj-nes, meaning "fresh of tongue".

This was translated into Greek language (ougot-las) by Manetho, who gave the king the name Tlas. In other words - a corruption on more than one occasion during the flow of time.

Because he had a very short reign we can hardly expect that his tomb is a mass of underground galleries like some of his prede- cessors. If he hasn't taken over an older construction and made it his own we can look for a monument of more modest size, maybe a mastaba of substance.

The area where to look for his tomb is probably around the other galleries east of the pyramid of king Sekhemhkhhet. This monument lies where the topography is unsuitable. A good guess might be that the area to the east already was occupied by superstructures (mastaba-like?) from dynasty 2 tombs, and that these were removed in later times.

The substructures should then still be detectable, but this place has not been properly investigated. There are candidates to be his tomb and in one mastaba (S3014) may reveal Weneg's name.

Sethenes - Sened - Senedj

Senedj was a pharaoh during the Second dynasty of Egypt who ruled for 20 years.

When pharaoh Sened was in power Egypt was probably divided once again into its southern and northern parts, with him as the king in North (Lower) Egypt from the capital Memphis.

In the Turin Canon the length of his reign is lacking but a notation of (at least) 70 years indicates his age when he died.

There are no contemporary remains of him, not even the smallest writing is found so far. A possible exception is a block of stone with his name on it, that was found and reused as building material in the mortuary temple of fourth dynasty king Khafre (Khefren) at Giza. This piece might just be of second dynasty origin and thus contemporary to Sened.

Another artifact with his name is from a private fourth dynasty tomb in Sakkara where a man called Shery has a title that tells that he is connected with the cult commemorating king Sened. This is a couple of hundred years after his death. The text also mentions king Peribsen who probably was Sened's counterpart in the southern part of the country at the same time.

All other material sources science have about him are made in later times and one remarkable object in a statuette from 2,000 years after his death made in the 800s BC.

His name appears on the king list, the Abydos list, and in the canon from a private tomb in Sakkara where he is depicted simply by a plucked goose. He is mentioned in the Canon of Turin as well, also there as a plucked goose.

Manetho gives him a reign of 41 years and calls him Sethenes. If that name has something to do with the god Seth we don't know, but Egyptian records refer to him as Sened.

His tomb has not as yet been identified.

Seth-Peribsen - Sekhemib - 'Powerful in Heart'

Peribsen was the fourth king of the 2nd Dynasty. He was actually not the legitimate heir of Nintjer. In fact, many historians believe that the king was an outsider who

instigated coup against King Nintejer. King Peribsen used the designation of Seth in his titles. Unfortunately, nothing from Peribsen's era is well documented except for his mortuary complex near Abydos.

He made sweeping political changes. The serekhs bearing the royal names are not surmounted by Horus anymore but by his religious rival, Set, who became the primary royal patron deity.

A stele bearing Peribsen's name found at Abydos



illustrates this change in loyalties.

In ancient Egypt, we find what sometimes appears to be almost a primeval struggle between good and evil. This conflict between the followers of Seth (Set) and the followers of Horus is very ancient and may very well form a component of our modern theological concepts. Yet there may have, during the predynastic period, actually been a battle between real rulers, symbolically or otherwise associated with these two gods, over control of Egypt. In the end, the followers of Horus seem to have (more or less) triumphed, and in general, Seth as a god, appears to us as the more sinister of the two, even though one might say he was never really completely vilified.

At a few points in Egyptian history, normally when we see conflicts between the north and south, Seth appears to gain favor with the Egyptian royalty. As an example, we have the 4th (or possible the 6th) king of Egypt's 2nd Dynasty. This king originally ascended the throne as Sekhemib, meaning "Powerful in Heart".

However, for the first time since the beginning of the 1st Dynasty, he specifically broke from tradition, associating his name with Seth rather than Horus. His name was changed from Sekhemib to Seth-Peribsen (Peribsen meaning "Hope of all Hearts").

It should be noted at this point, that apparently a minority of Egyptologists believe that Sekhemib and Seth-Peribsen were two different kings. Furthermore, some would

have him changing his name from Seth Peribsen to Horus Sekhemib, though in our context of earlier Egyptian kings, this seems less likely.

Apparently, the rivalry between Upper and Lower Egypt sparked a period of internal unrest within the country, when seemingly, the followers of Seth gained an upper hand that would take at least some hold on the country through the end of this Dynasty.

Most of the 1st and early 2nd Dynasty kings are better attested to in the north of Egypt, while the later kings of the 2nd Dynasty are better known from the south.

However, some argue that the reign of Seth Peribsen was not nearly as violent as we might believe, and that his name change was more politically motivated in order to assure peace. Others see it as a period when upper and lower Egypt may have simply separated due to the difficulties in administering such a large state.

Egyptologists seem ready to admit that the events of the second dynasty are extremely uncertain, if not the most uncertain in Egyptian history. It is entirely possible that the events surrounding Peribsen's name change are related to religious and theological motivations that remain unknown, due to the complex mythology surrounding Horus and Seth.

It is likely that if conflicts did occur during this period, it was eventually settled by Khasekemwy, the last king of the dynasty, though perhaps not without compromise (together with no small amount of bloody conflict).

His serekh (a palace facade containing his name) is surmounted by both the Jackal of Seth and the falcon of Horus. By the 3rd Dynasty, all of the kings reverted back to the Horus title.

Even though Seth-Peribsen was considered a legitimate king by later generations of ancient Egyptians, it is clear that the followers of Horus (at least in relationship to the followers of Seth) dominated Egyptian history.

If indeed the struggle was originally not between gods, but rather mortal men under the leadership of ancient kings, two things seem clear. First, during at least the early dynasties, Seth (as a god) was not seen to be nearly as sinister as in later times.

However, as time passed and the worship of Horus and his association with the King grew ever stronger, the attributes of Seth suffered.

We know Seth today as a god of confusion, the spirit of disorder and the personification of violence, as well as bad faith. Yet in the Egyptian spirit of balance and duality, he was a necessary component of their religion.

Seth-Peribsen may have ruled for around 17 years.

His predecessor is often listed as Nynetjet, though there is evidence and some acceptance among Egyptologists that two rulers, named Weneg and Sened, may have reigned between these two kings.

We know that Egyptian power extended as far south as Elephantine during his reign, for seal impressions bearing his name were discovered there in 1985. Apparently, there was a temple dedicated to Seth on the Island during later times.



Seth-Peribsen's tomb at Abydos

Seth Peribsen apparently built a fairly small tomb at Abydos with a burial chamber lined with mudbrick, of which only the substructure survives. As might be expected, there has been no tomb of his found at Saqqara, where many of the 1st Dynasty kings were buried.

Khasekhemwy - "The Two Powerful Ones Appear"



Khasekhemwy is perhaps the best attested ruler of the 2nd Dynasty, a period that we know very little about in general.

Khasekhemwy (d. 2686 BC; sometimes spelled Khasekhemui) was the 5th and final Pharaoh of the Second dynasty of Egypt, ruling for 30 years. Little is known of Khasekhemwy, other than that he led several significant military campaigns and built several monuments, still extant, mentioning war against the Northerners.

Egyptologists have normally placed him as the successor of Seth-Peribsen, though Manetho lists three kings between them, consisting of Sethenes (Sendji), Chaires (Neterka) and Nebhercheres (Neferkara). However, there is no archaeological evidence for these kings and almost no other information to verify their existence.

However, some Egyptologists believe he had another immediate predecessor named Khasekhem, with an obviously similar name, though other scholars believe Khasekhem and Khasekhemwy were in fact the same person. They argue that Khasekhem changed his name to Khasekhemwy after he squashed a rebellion, thus reuniting Upper and Lower Egypt. His new Horus name means "The Two Powerful Ones appear". Afterwards, the rendering of his name on his serekh was surmounted by both the Horus falcon and Seth jackel, marking it as unique in Egyptian history.

Perhaps Khasekhemwy's use of both the Horus and Seth god's representations in his name was an act of reconciliation. We might even assume a politically inspired unification of the country, were it not for evidence to the contrary. He in fact is believed to have married a northern princess, but apparently only to cement the control he gained through battle.

On a stone vase, we find recorded, "The year of fighting the northern enemy within the city of Nekhet." Nekhet, now known as el-Kab, lies on the eastern bank of the Nile across from the ancient capital, Nekhen, known to the Greeks as Hierakonpolis. Hence, this was a major and dramatic battle between Upper and Lower Egyptians. On the base of two seated statues of Khasekhemwy, we are told that some 47,209 northerners were killed, a huge number considering the relatively small population of Egypt during the early dynastic period.

The Northern princess that Khasekhemwy married, a woman named Nemathap (Nimaatapis), whose jar sealings reveal as "The King-bearing Mother". She probably mothered the earliest rulers of Egypt's 3rd Dynasty including Djoser.

It is also important to note that the earliest inscriptional evidence of an Egyptian king at the Lebanese site of Byblos belonged to the reign of Khasekhemwy.

Khasekhemwy apparently undertook considerable building projects upon the reunification of Egypt. He built in stone at el-Kab, Hierakonpolis and Abydos. He apparently built a unique, as well as huge tomb at Abydos, the last such royal tomb built in that necropolis (Tomb V). The trapezoidal tomb measures some 70 meters (230 ft) in length and is 17 meters (56 ft) wide at its northern end, and 10 meters (33 ft) wide at its southern end. This area was divided into 58 rooms.

Prior to some recent discoveries from the First Dynasty, its central burial chamber was considered the oldest masonry structure in the world, being built of quarried limestone. Here, the excavators discovered the king's scepter of gold and sard, as well as several beautifully made small stone pots with gold leaf lid coverings, apparently

missed by earlier tomb robbers. In fact, Petrie detailed a number of items removed during the excavations of Amelineau. Other items included flint tools, as well as a variety of copper tools and vessels, stone vessels and pottery vessels filled with grain and fruit. There were also small, glazed objects, carnelian beads, model tools, basketwork and a large quantity of seals.

However, probably more impressive is a structure located in the desert about 1,000 yards from the tomb. Known as the Shunet el-Zebib (storehouse of the Dates), it was a huge rectangular structure measuring 123 x 64 meters (404 x 210 ft). The mudbrick walls of the structure, with their articulated palace facade, were as much as 5 meters (16 ft) thick and as high as 20 meters (66 ft). Incredibly, fragments of these mudbrick walls have survived for nearly 5,000 years.

Some Egyptologists believe that the complex of buildings within this enclosure may have functioned in a capacity similar to a mortuary temple. In fact, it had much in common with the enclosure of [Djoser's Step Pyramid](#) at Saqqara. Besides the niched inner walls of the parameter, a large mound of sand and gravel covered with mud brick, approximately square in plan, was discovered within the enclosure. Located in a similar position within the enclosure as the Step Pyramid in Djoser's complex, this mound may have been a forerunner of the step pyramids.

Khasekhemwy's structures are seen as an important evolutionary stage of the ancient Egyptian mortuary complex. Khasekhemwy died in about 2686 BC.

Egypt - The Third Dynasty - (2686 - 2575 BC)

The Old Kingdom - The Age of the Pyramids

The Pharaohs of the Third Dynasty were the first to have actual pyramids constructed as shrines to their deaths. Although crude, these step pyramids were the predecessors to the later Pyramids of Giza and others. The first of these pyramids was designed by Imhotep for Djoser. Prior to, and during the construction of the step pyramids, rulers were buried in a structure called a Mastaba.

A mastaba was a flatroofed, mudbrick, rectangular building with sloping sides that marked the burial site of many eminent Egyptians of the Egypt's ancient period.

Mastaba comes from the Arabic for bench, because they look like a mud bench when seen from a distance. In a mastaba, a deep chamber was dug out and lined with stone, mud bricks or wood. Above ground, the mud was piled up to mark the grave, oblong in a shape with a length approximately 4 times its width. Although this provided a much grander tomb, it was also a much cooler tomb. This upset the early priests as it allowed the bodies to decompose due to the fact that water no longer evaporated, preventing desiccation of the bodies.

The Mastaba were the standard tomb type in early Egypt (the predynastic and early dynastic periods).

While Manetho names one Necherophes, and the Turin King List names Nebka, as the first pharaoh of the Third Dynasty of Egypt, some contemporary Egyptologists believe Djoser was the first king of this dynasty, pointing out that the order in which some predecessors of Khufu are mentioned in the Papyrus Westcar suggests that Nebka should be placed between Djoser and Huni, and not before Djoser. That the Turin King List has noted Djoser's name in red may also be significant.

In any case, Djoser is the best known king of this dynasty, for commissioning his vizier Imhotep to build the earliest surviving pyramids, the Step Pyramid. Some authorities believe that Imhotep lived into the reign of the Pharaoh Huni.

Little is known for certain of Sekhemkhet. However, it is believed that Khaba possibly built the Layer Pyramid at Zawyet el'Aryan. Huni, the last king of this dynasty, like Djoser had a renowned vizier, named Khagemni. In the Ramassid period, a text named the Instructions was ascribed to Kagemni.

The Layer Pyramid (known locally in Arabic as *Haram el-Meduwara*, or *Round Pyramid*) is located in the necropolis of Zawyet el'Aryan. It is thought to be the tomb of Khaba, of the Third Dynasty, but this is based upon excavations in a tomb inside the pyramid complex, and is disputed.

Sanakhte - Nebka - Khaba - Strong Protection (2686 2668 BC)



Uncertainty swirls around the placement, and also the events of the 3rd Dynasty king known as Sanakhte (Sanakht). He may have been Nebka, who was known to Manetho, and listed on both the Turin Canon and the Abydos king list as the first king of this dynasty. However, this is problematic to say the least, for we base our belief that he was Nebka on a source that lists his Horus name, Sanakhte, together with a second name that ends with the element "ka". Most of the information we have on this king refers to him as Nebka. In fact, some sources list the two as separate kings, with Nebka founding the 3rd Dynasty and Sanakhte ruling later, perhaps after Khaba.

However, despite this, mud seal impressions bearing the name of Nethery-khet Djoser from the Abydos tomb of the last king of the 2nd Dynasty Khasekhemuy and connected with the burial seem to suggest that Khasekhemuy's widow and her already ruling son Djoser were in charge of the king's burial. On the basis of sealing from the

tomb of Khasekhemwy, which name her as "Mother of the King's Children," the wife of the last ruler of the 2nd Dynasty seems to have been one Nimaethap. The latter name was also found, with the title of "King's Mother", upon seal impressions from Mastaba K1 at Beit Khallaf, a gigantic monument dated to the reign of Djoser. Hence, on the basis that Djoser was succeeded by Sekhemkhet and of indications pointing to Khaba as the third in line, Nebka may have been the fourth king of the dynasty, to be equated with the Nebkara following Djoser-teti and preceding Huni in the Saqqara king list.

Many theories regarding the rule of Sanakhte have been advanced, including the possibility that Sanakhte, as a member of a former ruling family, usurped the throne from the ruling family at the beginning of the dynasty. Hence, Djoser could have indeed buried his father, Khasekhemuy, and won back the throne from the usurper, Sanakhte. However, we are told that today, most Egyptologists do believe that he was a latter king of the Dynasty, even though most current documentary resources continue to equate Sanakhte with Nebka, as the 1st King of Egypt's noteworthy 3rd Dynasty who probably ruled from This near Abydos.

Little is known of this king, despite a reign of some 18 or 19 years (others might attribute a much shorter reign of from five to seven years, which would allow a better fit for him ruling before Djoser), for his reign is missing from the Palermo Stone, and important source of information on this period of Egyptian history. However, Nebka is mentioned in Papyrus Westcar. The only large scale monumental building that can possibly be attributed to him is at Beit Khallaf (mastaba K2).

His name also appears on the island of Elephantine in southern Egypt near Aswan on a small pyramid. Another of the few sources we have evidencing this king is a fragment of a sandstone relief from Wadi Maghara in the Sinai. It would seem that he, along with Djoser, began the exploitation in earnest of the mineral wealth of the Sinai peninsula, with its rich deposits of turquoise and copper. It shows the king's name in a serekh before his face.

The relief depicts Sanakhte, who is about to smite an enemy, wearing the Red Crown of Lower Egypt. We also know of a priest of Nebka's mortuary cult who appears to have lived in the reign of Djoser.

Some Egyptologists continue to believe that he may have been the brother of his famous successor, Djoser (or Zoser), or if not, perhaps his father, but apparently current thought among Egyptologists leans against this. It has been suggested that his tomb at Saqqara was incorporated into the Step Pyramid of Djoser, though little real evidence for this exists, but it has also been suggested that his is a little known monument that seems to nicely fill the typological lacuna between the Shunet el Zebib and the Step Pyramid at Saqqara.

Djoser - Netjerykhet - Divine of the Body - (2668 2649 BC)



Other spellings of his name include: Zoser, Dzoser, Zozer (or Zozzer), Dsr, Djeser, Zoser, Zosar, Dj  ser, Djeser, Horus-Netjerikhet, Horus-Netjerichet.

Netjerikhet Djoser (Turin King List "Dsr-it"; Manetho "Tosarthros") is the best-known pharaoh of the Third Dynasty of Egypt, for commissioning his vizier Imhotep to build his [Step Pyramid at Saqqara](#).



In contemporary inscriptions, he is called Netjerikhet, meaning body of the gods. Later sources, which include a New Kingdom reference to his Step Pyramid, help confirm that Netjerikhet and Djoser are the same person.

While Manetho names one Necherophes, and the Turin King List names Nebka, as the first ruler of the Third dynasty, some contemporary Egyptologists believe Djoser was the first king of this dynasty, pointing out that the order in which some predecessors of Khufu are mentioned in the Papyrus Westcar suggests that Nebka should be placed between Djoser and Huni, and not before Djoser.



Westcar Papyrus is a document about Khufu, a 4th-Dynasty Egyptian leader, and contains a cycle of five stories about marvels performed by priests. Each of these tales is being told at the court of Khufu by his sons.

Manetho also states Djoser ruled for 29 years, while the Turin King List states it was for 19. It is possible that Manetho's number is a mistake for the earlier Turin King

List; and it is also possible that the author of the Turin King List confused the bi-annual cattle censuses as years, and that Djoser actually reigned for 37 or 38 years. Because of his many building projects, particularly at Saqqara, some scholars argue that Djoser must have ruled for at least 29 years.

Because Queen Nimaethap, the wife of Khasekhemwy, the last king of the Second dynasty of Egypt, appears to have held the title of "Mother of the King", some writers argue that she was Djoser's mother and Khasekhemwy was his father. Three royal women are known from during his reign: Inetkawes, Hetephernebti and a third, whose name is destroyed. One of them might have been his wife, and the one whose name is lost may have been Nimaethap. The relationship between Djoser and his successor, Sekhemkhet, is not known.

Djoser sent several military expeditions to the Sinai Peninsula, during which the local inhabitants were subdued. He also sent expeditions to the Sinai where they mined for valuable minerals like turquoise and copper. It was also strategically important as a buffer between Asia and the Nile valley. He also may have fixed the southern boundary of his kingdom at the First Cataract.

Some fragmentary reliefs found at Heliopolis and Gebelein mention Djoser's name and suggest that he had commissioned construction projects in those cities. An inscription claiming to date to the reign of Djoser, but actually created during the Ptolemaic Dynasty, relates how Djoser rebuilt the temple of the god Khnum on the island of Elephantine at the First Cataract, thus ending a famine in Egypt. While this inscription is but a legend, it does show that more than two millennia after his reign, Djoser was still remembered.

Sekhemkhet - Djoser Teti - (2649 2643 BC)

Sekhemkhet was Pharaoh in Egypt during the Third dynasty. According to Manethonian tradition, a king known as "Djoserty" reigned a relatively brief seven years, and modern scholars believe Djoserty and Sekhemkhet to be the same person. His reign would thought to have been from about 2649 BC until 2643 BC.

While there was a known successor to Djoser, Sekhemkhet's name was unknown until 1951, when the leveled foundation and vestiges of an unfinished Step Pyramid were discovered at Saqqara by Zakaria Goneim. Only the lowest step of the pyramid had been constructed at the time of his death.

Jar seals found on the site were inscribed with this king's name. From its design and an inscription from his pyramid at Saqqara, it is thought that Djoser's famous architect Imhotep had a hand in the design of this pyramid.

Archaeologists believe that Sekhemket's pyramid would have been larger than Djoser's had it been completed. Today, the site, which lies southwest of Djoser's complex, is mostly concealed beneath sand dunes and is known as the Buried Pyramid.

[The Pyramid of Sekhemkhet](#)

Khaba - The Soul Appears - (2643 2637 BC)

Khaba was the fourth king during the 3rd Dynasty. He is believed to have reigned a relatively brief four years between 2603 BC to 2599 BC, although these dates are highly conjectural, based on what scant evidence exists of this early king.



[Zawiyat el-Aryan Pyramids](#)

Khaba is commonly associated with the Layer Pyramid, located at Zawyet el'Aryan, about 4 km south of Giza. It is an unfinished pyramid whose construction is typical of Third Dynasty masonry and would have originally risen about 42-45m in height (it is now about 20m). While there were no inscriptions directly relating the pyramid to this king, a number of alabaster vessels inscribed with this king's name were discovered nearby in Mastaba Z-500 located just north of the pyramid.

Khaba is mentioned in the Turin King List as "erased", which may imply that there were dynastic problems during his reign, or that the scribe working on this list was unable to fully decipher the name from the more ancient records being copied from. It has also been suggested that Khaba may be the Horus name of the last king of the Third Dynasty, Huni, and that the two kings are the same person.

Khaba's name, typically displayed within a serekh rather than the more typical cartouche form established by the end of this dynasty, was written using the sign of a rising sun that had the sound value of kha, and a Saddle-billed Stork that had the sound value of ba.

Huni - The Smiter - (2637 2613 BC)



Huni was the last Pharaoh of Egypt of the Third Dynasty.

Huni's wife Queen Meresankh I was the mother of Snefru. Huni was probably the father of Hetepheres, queen of the next king, Snofru.

While there is some confusion over kings and their order of rule near the end of the 3rd Dynasty, it is fairly clear who terminates the period and who also stood on the threshold between ancient Egypt's formative period and the grand courts of the Old Kingdom to follow. Huni paved the way for the great pyramid builders of the 4th Dynasty with his substantial construction projects and the possible restructuring of regional administration.

Yet, we really know very little about this king who ruled during a pivotal point in Egyptian history. The name Huni may be translated as "The Smiter". He is attested on monuments of his time by his *nswt-bity* name, written in a cartouche. Alternative readings have been suggested for his name, but none have been agreed upon, so he is typically called Huni even though it probably represents a corruption of his original name. He may also be one and the same as Horus Qahedjet, though this is uncertain.

In the late 1960s, a limestone stela of unknown provenance was purchased by the Louvre museum. It was inscribed with the previously unknown Horus name, Qahedjet. The stela was important to Egyptian art historians because it depicts the earliest representation of a god (Horus) embracing the king. Therefore, it received considerable attention.

Though the stela is very similar in style to the relief panels of the Step Pyramid of Djoser, the execution of the carving is superior, and the iconography is more developed. Hence, Egyptologists tend to favor a date for the stela at the end of the 3rd Dynasty. Furthermore, the Horus name for the kings who Huni succeeded have been tentatively identified. Therefore, though with no certainty, some scholars believe Qahedjet to be the Huni's Horus name.

The Turin Canon provides a reign for Huni of twenty-four years, and a shorter reign than this would appear unlikely given the scale of his completed building projects. His position as the last king of the 3rd Dynasty and Sneferu's immediate predecessor is confirmed by both the Papyrus Prisse and by the autobiographical inscription in the tomb of Metjen at Saqqara.

Actually, the most impressive monument which can be relatively clearly attributed to Huni is a small granite step pyramid on the island of Elephantine. It is now thought that a granite cone, bearing the inscription *ssd Hwni*, meaning "Diadem of Huni", and with the determinative of a palace originally came from Elephantine. It would seem therefore that Huni built either a palace or a building associated with the royal cult on this island.

This small pyramid, together with others of similar size and construction located at Seila in the Fayoum, Zawiyet el-Meitin in Middle Egypt, South Abydos, Tukh near Naqada, el-Kula near Hierakonpolis and in south Edfu, appear to be unique, both in their size and purpose. Many Egyptologists believe that, based on the monument at Elephantine, all but the Seila pyramid may be dated to the reign of Huni. Excavations have shown that his successor, Sneferu, was responsible for the pyramid at Seila.

[Elephantine](#) is an island in the River Nile, It measures some 1.2 km from north to south, and is about 400 m across at its widest. It is a part of the modern Egyptian city of Aswan.

There has been no small amount of debate about the purpose of these pyramids. Almost all of the major pyramids in Egypt, before and after Huni, were royal tombs of some nature. However, these small step pyramids appear to have little to do with funerary practices. Many scholars have suggested, though there is little proof, that they were constructed as cult places of the king or marked royal estates.

There was, for example, an administrative building attached to the pyramid at Elephantine. Their locations suggest that there could have been one such pyramid for each nome (ancient Egyptian province), at least in southern Upper Egypt. Some have even suggested that their construction might have been associated with the reorganization of regional government during Huni's reign. Irregardless, their purpose remains unclear without further evidence for their use.

No one is certain about Huni's burial. It has been suggested that the pyramid at Maidum may have been his, and many Egyptologists seem certain that it was at least begun by him, though Middle and New Kingdom graffiti from the site credits Sneferu with its construction.

However, if Sneferu had a hand in this project, it is probable that he only finished the monument and converted it into a true pyramid. After all, Sneferu built at least two other large pyramids and was buried in one of these. Otherwise, Huni's burial remains a mystery. If he was not buried in the Maidum pyramid, than he may have been buried at Saqqara, though the only obvious location at that site, the unexcavated Ptahhotep enclosure to the west of the Djoser's complex, has no substructure. Hence, it is unlikely to be an unfinished step pyramid complex.

Some scholars theorize that the small step pyramids built by Huni somehow lessened the importance attached to the royal tomb. According to this view, Huni may never have constructed a pyramid tomb complex at all.

However, the general consensus seem to be that the Maidum Pyramid was indeed his, even though there is no evidence of there ever having been a stone sarcophagus in the subterranean burial chamber and therefore no clear evidence he was ever buried in this pyramid. Another theory suggests that he was actually buried in an unidentified mastaba number 17 on the northeast side of the pyramid, where there is a typical Old Kingdom, uninscribed granite sarcophagus.

Though we traditionally end the 3rd Dynasty with Huni, he was probably the father of the next King. It is though that the mother of Sneferu was probably Meresankh, who was either a lesser wife or concubine of Huni's. If so, Sneferu would have married his half sister, Hetepheres I, who was Huni's daughter. Little else is known about Huni's family relationships.

Huni's memory lived on for some time after his death, for the Palermo Stone lists an estate belonging to his cult during the reign of the 5th Dynasty King Neferirkara some 150 years after his death. This is really no surprise, for the achievements of Huni's

reign are impressive, and he clearly ushered in the great culture of Egypt's Old Kingdom.

The structure of provincial government recorded in the tomb of Metjen probably signals a definitive break from the Early Dynastic past, and set the stage for the absolute central control of manpower and resources needed for the massive pyramid building of the 4th Dynasty.

The Fourth Dynasty

The Fourth Dynasty of Egypt was the second of the four dynasties considered forming the Old Kingdom. The pharaohs of this dynasty include some of the best-known kings of ancient Egypt known for constructing pyramids, perhaps the hallmark of Egypt. All of the kings of this dynasty commissioned at least one pyramid to serve as a tomb or cenotaph.

Like the Third Dynasty, these kings maintained their capital at Memphis. Sneferu, the dynasty's founder, is known to have commissioned three pyramids, and some believe he was responsible for a fourth. So although Khufu, his successor and son by Hetepheres I, erected the largest pyramid in Egypt, Sneferu had more stone and brick moved than any other pharaoh.

Khufu (Greek Cheops), his son Khafra (Greek Chephren), and his grandson Menkaura (Greek Mycerinus) all achieved lasting fame in the construction of their pyramids. To organize and feed the manpower needed to create these pyramids required a centralized government with extensive powers, and Egyptologists believe the Old Kingdom at this time demonstrated this level of sophistication.

Although it was once believed that slaves built these monuments, study of the pyramids and their environs have shown that they were built by a *corv e* of peasants drawn from across Egypt, who apparently worked while the annual Nile flood covered their fields.

While the pyramids suggest that Egypt enjoyed unparalleled prosperity during the Fourth Dynasty, they survived as a reminder to the inhabitants of the forced labor that created them, and these kings - Khufu in particular - were remembered as tyrants: first in the Papyrus Westcar, and millennia later in legends recorded by Herodotus (Histories, 2.124-133).

The archetype of the Turin King List, which otherwise records all of the names of the kings of this dynasty, has two names missing, which the scribe indicated with the Egyptian word *wꜣf* ("missing").

Sextus Julius Africanus reports Manetho had the names Bikheris and Tamphthis in those positions, while Eusebius does not mention either. Some authorities (such as K.S.B. Ryholt) follow Africanus in adding a possible Egyptian version of these names to the list; others omit them entirely.

The earliest known records of Egypt's contact with her neighbors are dated to this dynasty. The Palermo stone records the arrival of 40 ships laden with timber from an unnamed foreign land in the reign of Sneferu.

The names of Khufu and Djedefra were inscribed in gneiss quarries in the Western Desert 65 km. to the northwest of Abu Simbel; objects dated to the reigns of Khufu, Khafra, and Menkaura have been uncovered at Byblos and to the reign of Khafra even further away at Ebla, evidence of diplomatic gifts or trade.

It is unclear how this dynasty came to an end. Our only clue is that a number of Fourth Dynasty administrators are attested as remaining in office in the Fifth Dynasty under Userkaf.

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The earliest known records of Egypt's contact with her neighbors are dated to this dynasty. The Palermo stone records the arrival of 40 ships laden with timber from an unnamed foreign land in the reign of Sneferu.

The names of Khufu and Djedefra were inscribed in gneiss quarries in the Western Desert 65 km. to the northwest of Abu Simbel; objects dated to the reigns of Khufu,

Khafra, and Menkaura have been uncovered at Byblos and to the reign of Khafra even further away at Ebla, evidence of diplomatic gifts or trade.

It is unclear how this dynasty came to an end. Our only clue is that a number of Fourth Dynasty administrators are attested as remaining in office in the Fifth Dynasty under Userkaf.

Snefru - Snofru (2613 BC - 2589 BC)

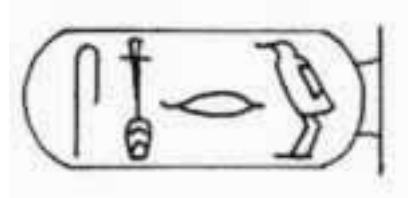


First king of the 4th Dynasty

Sneferu, also spelt as Snefru or Snofru (in Greek known as Soris), was the founder of the fourth dynasty of Egypt, reigning from around 2613 BC to 2589 BC. While the Turin Cannon records the length of his reign as 24 years, graffiti in his northern (Red, and later) pyramid at Dahshur may suggest a longer reign.

His name, Snefer, means "To make beautiful" in Egyptian.

His Horus name was Nebmaat, but his royal titulary was the first to have his other name, Snefru, enclosed within a cartouche.



It was by this "cartouche name" that he and subsequent kings were best known. He enjoyed a very good reputation by later generations of ancient Egyptians. Considered a benign ruler (highly unusual), the Egyptian term, snefer can be translated as "to make beautiful".

Snefru was most likely the son of Huni, his predecessor, though there seems some controversy to this, considering the break in Dynasties. However, his mother may have been Meresankh I, who was probably a lesser wife or concubine and therefore not of royal blood. Hence, this may explain what prompted the ancient historian, Manetho (here, Snefru is known by his Greek name, Soris), to begin a new dynasty with Snefru. However, it should be noted that both the royal canon of Turin and the later Saqqara List both end the previous dynasty with Huni.

Snefru was almost certainly married to Hetepheres I, who would have been at least his half sister, probably by a more senior queen, in order to legitimize his rule. She was the mother of his son, Khufu, who became Egypt's best known pyramid builder, responsible for the Great Pyramid at Giza.

It is believed he had at least three other wives who bore him a number of other sons, including his eldest son, Nefermaet, who became a vizier. He probably did not outlive his father, so was denied the Egyptian throne. Other sons include Kanefer, another vizier who apparently continued in this capacity under Khufu (Cheops). We also believe he fathered several other sons, and at least several daughters.

In reality, Snefru may probably be credited with developing the pyramid into its true form. He apparently began by build what was probably a step pyramid at Maidum (Madum), which was later converted into a true pyramid. But this effort met with disaster (though probably not a quick one), because of the pyramid's mass and steep slope.

He also built the [Red Pyramid](#) and [Bent Pyramid](#) at Dahshur. The Bent Pyramid was the first true pyramid planned from the outset, while the Red Pyramid is the first successful true pyramid built in Egypt. The Red and Bent Pyramids are, respectively, the third and fourth largest pyramids known to have been built in Egypt.

In addition, Snefru is credited with at least one of a series of "regional" or provincial pyramids, at Seila. This is a small, step pyramid with no substructure. A number of other similar pyramids dot the Egyptian landscape, as far south as Elephantine Island, and some Egyptologists believe Snefru (or his father) may be responsible for all, or at

least some of these. No one is very certain of the purpose of these small pyramids, but they were likely either associated with provincial cult worship of the king, or may have been located near to the king's "rural" palaces.

In many respects, including the combined scale of building projects and the evolutionary architectural achievements, Snefru must be ranked as one of Egypt's most renowned pyramid builders. In fact, the sheer volume of building work was greater than any other ruler in the Old Kingdom.

However, his achievements in pyramid building extended beyond the pyramid structure itself, and obviously incorporated evolving religious beliefs. During his reign, we see the first real elements of the sun worship that was to follow and reach a culmination over a thousand years later in the reign of [Akhenaten](#).

For the first time in the orientation of the building plan the main axis was oriented from east to west rather than north to south, as were earlier pyramids. This was apparently a move away from the astronomical "star" oriented beliefs, toward the east-west passage of the sun and the worship of Ra. Now, with Snefru, the mortuary temple is on the east rather than on the north side like in the Djoser Step Pyramid complex at Saqqara. Furthermore, we see the first of the small satellite pyramids placed near the southern face of the main pyramid, a structure that we still do not completely understand today. Furthermore, the pyramid and mortuary temple elements were now linked by a causeway to a valley temple located on the edge of the cultivation closer to the Nile. It is believed the valley temple operated as a monumental gateway to the whole of the pyramid complex.

While the growing importance of the sun worship is obvious in Snefru's reign, the worship of Osiris was probably also beginning to influence Egyptian religion, though little in the way of documented evidence can be supplied. With all of Snefru's building activities, it is not surprising that he was very active in the quarries. His name has been found attested to in rock inscriptions at the turquoise and copper mines of the Wadi Maghara in the Sinai peninsula, as well as other quarries.

Snefru is also credited with keeping the administrative power of the country within the royal family. As stated above, two of his sons became viziers and it is likely that many other royal children held important posts. By the end of the 6th Dynasty, administrative power within Egypt would be greatly decentralized which is considered at least one of the reasons Egypt fell into the chaos of the First Intermediate Period. Generally, Egypt was most powerful and prosperous when Egyptian rulers maintained a strong central government, like that of Snefru's. In order to further facilitate this centralized power base, he also apparently reorganized land ownership among his nobles, presumably to prevent them from becoming too powerful, but also to stimulate the cultivation of marshlands.

According to the Palermo Stone, he campaigned militarily against the Nubians and Libyans. The expedition to Nubia was a very large campaign. The Palermo Stone records a booty of 7,000 captives and 200,000 head of cattle. The population of Nubia was never very great, so this was perhaps a rather substantial depopulation of the area. Not only were these campaigns against Nubia initiated to obtain raw material and goods, but also to protect Egypt's southern borders as well as the all important African

trade routes. The campaign in Libya records 11,000 captives and 13,100 head of cattle.

The Palermo Stone also provides a record of forty ships that brought wood (probably cedar) from an unnamed region, but perhaps Lebanon. Among other building uses, Snefru is credited as having used some of this wood to build Nile river boats up to about 50 meters (about 170 ft.) in length.

It is interesting to note that Snefru's later deification was perhaps partially due to his status as an "ideal" king, whose deeds were emulated by later kings to justify their legitimacy to the throne. His reputation was no doubt enhanced by the Westcar Papyrus (now in Berlin), probably written during the Hyksos period. Yet, even though considered a warlike king by many, his worship in the Middle Kingdom was just as much fueled by the admiration of common Egyptians (according to traditional history).

Ancient literature repeatedly depicts him as a ruler who would address common Egyptians as "my friend", or "my brother". It is also not surprising that during the Middle Kingdom, his cult was particularly strong among the Sinai miners. Because of his massive building projects, considerable resources from Snefru's reign were employed to develop those quarries.

Therefore, Snefru became especially associated with this quarry district. Certainly Snefru had a number of choices for his burial, but we believe he was actually interred in the Red Pyramid at Dahshure. There, in the 1950s, the remains of a mummy were found of a man past middle age, but not much so, suggesting that the king may have come to rule Egypt at a fairly early age.

Some Egyptologists continue to attribute the Medium Pyramid to Huni (or more properly, Nysuteh), as well as possibly to Horus Qahedjet (2637-2613 BC). However, even these scholars appear to believe that Snefru finished this pyramid, but it would have been highly unusual for a ruler of Egypt to have made such a substantial contribution to his predecessor's mortuary complex. Still the question of who actually started the construction of this pyramid is a matter for future discovery.

Reference: *Monarchs of the Nile* Aidan Dodson, 1995

Cheops - Khufu - Suphis - Protected by Khnum - (2589 BC - 2566 BC)



Second king of the 4th Dynasty

He was allegedly the builder of the [Great Pyramid of Giza](#) - the only one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World still standing - and founder of the Giza Plateau near modern Cairo and Memphis. He reigned from around 2589 BC to 2566 BC.

Unlike his grandfather Huni, and his father Sneferu, both of whom were remembered as benevolent and compassionate rulers, Khufu was reported by Herodotus to have been a cruel despot.

Khufu's Horus name was Medjedu, and his full birth-name was Khnum-Khufu, meaning, "the god Khnum protects me." Khnum was considered the local god of Elephantine, near the first Nile cataract, who created mankind on his "potter's wheel" and was also responsible for the proper flooding of the Nile.

Khufu may have been already on in years when he took the throne. His kinsman and vizier, Hemunu, was also the architect of the Great Pyramid. Khufu's senior wife was named Merityotes, and she and his other two wives were each buried in one of the three smaller subsidiary pyramids that lie just south of the mortuary temple of the main pyramid.

Khufu had several sons, among them Kawab, who would have been his heir, Khufukhaf, Minkhaf, and Djedefhor, Djedefre and Khephren or Khafre. The so-called Papyrus Westcar contains tales of some of these sons.

Though the Great Pyramid somehow represents the very essence of "ancient Egypt," the King for whom it was built as a tomb has left little recorded information of his actual reign. Khufu probably reigned for 23 or 24 years. There is evidence that he sent expeditions to the Sinai, and worked the diorite stone quarries deep in the Nubian desert, north-west of Abu Simbel.



Inscriptions on the rocks at Wadi Maghara record the presence of his troops there to exploit the turquoise mines, and a very faint inscription at Elephantine indicates that he probably mined the red granite of Aswan as well.

Herodotus, who wrote his histories and commentaries on Egypt around 450 BCE, centuries after Khufu had reigned around 2585 BCE, recorded this about the King: *Kheops brought the country into all kinds of misery. He closed the temples, forbade his subjects to offer sacrifices, and compelled them without exception to labor upon his works the Egyptians can hardly bring themselves to mention Kheops so great is their hatred.*

It was even said that Khufu set one of his daughters into a brothel so that she could raise revenue to build the pyramid, also asking each client for a block of stone so she could build her own pyramid. No evidence exists for such a story, though there are smaller pyramids which probably belonged to half-sister/wives of Khufu, and he did have at least three daughters of record.

Even prior to Herodotus, the author of the document now known as the Papyrus Westcar depicts Khufu as cruel. The text was inscribed in the Hyksos period prior to

the 18th Dynasty, though its composition seems to date from the 12th Dynasty. One story, Kheops and the Magicians, relates that a magician named Djedi who can reputedly bring back the dead to life. He is presented to Khufu, who orders a prisoner brought to him, so that he may see a demonstration of the magician's talents.



Khufu further orders that the prisoner should be killed, and then Djedi can bring him back to life. When Djedi objects, the King relents his initial decision, and Djedi then demonstrates his talent on a goose.

It should be noted that while Khufu has acquired this reputation, accurate or not, the years and labor that went into building his Pyramid tomb was surpassed by the three pyramids built by his father Sneferu, who was contrarily remembered as an amiable ruler.

The Great Pyramid originally stood 481 feet high complete with its original casing, but since it lost its top 30 feet, it stands only 451 feet now. It covers about 13 acres. The exterior casing was shining white limestone, laid from the top downwards. It was largely robbed in the Middle Ages to build medieval Cairo. Nothing now remains of the limestone mortuary temple, which was 171 feet by 132 feet, except its black basalt floor. The complex's valley temple has disappeared under the Arab village, though traces of this temple could be seen when new sewer systems were being laid down.

Along with the pyramid itself, the remains of a magnificent 141-foot long ship of cedar wood had also been found in a rock-cut pit close to the south side of the Great Pyramid. A second ship may also rest in a second sealed pit, though not in as good condition as this first. The ship was restored over many years, and now lies in a special museum built near the pyramid itself. The ship may have symbolized the solar journey of the deceased king with the gods, particularly the sun-god Ra.

It is ironic indeed that for all the magnificence of his pyramid, his funeral boat, and the wonders of the funerary furnishings that were



discovered belonging to his mother, Queen Hetepheres, wife to Sneferu, the only portrait we have of Khufu is a tiny 3-inch high statue sculpted in ivory.

It may have been once easy to contemplate the builder of such a monument as the Great Pyramid to have virtually enslaved his people to accomplish it, and to order a royal princess to prostitute herself. Sneferu, Khufu's father, had three separate pyramids built during his reign. Surely the workmen or nobles would have left some evidence of their dissatisfaction at least at the whimsicality of their sovereign if not his despotism. Yet Sneferu is remembered as amiable and pleasure-loving.

And Khafre, Khufu's son, left not only a pyramid but quite possibly a Sphinx as well. And history, or at least, historians, do not record Khafre as being a despot.

Continuing work at Giza is further showing that the men responsible for the building of the pyramids led normal lives. They baked bread, ate fish, made offerings to their blessed dead and the gods, and cared for their families.

They left funerary stelae and tombs behind to give us an indication of how they considered their lot. It is more likely that the Greeks could less easily conceive of such a project of long-term labor as being anything but forced. Perhaps some archaeologist millennia in our own future may find rusted iron skeletons of some of our finest skyscrapers and wonder to what cruel overlords we owed the sweat of our own forced labor.

Reference: *Monarchs of the Nile* Aidan Dodson, 1995

Radjedef - Djedefra - Enduring Like Re - (2566 BC - 2558 BC)

Third king of the 4th Dynasty

The Egyptian pharaoh Djedefra was the successor and son of Khufu. The mother of Djedefra is unknown.

He married his (half-) sister Hetepheres II, which may have been necessary to legitimize his claims to the throne if his mother was one of Khufu's lesser wives.

He also had another wife, Khentet-en-ka with whom he had (at least) three sons, Setka, Baka and Hernet and one daughter, Neferhetepes.

The Turin King List credits him with a rule of eight years, but the highest known year referenced to during this reign was the year of the 11th cattle count. This would mean that Djedefra ruled for at least eleven years, if the cattle counts were annual, or 21 years if the cattle counts were biennial.

He was the first king to use the title Son of Ra as part of his royal titulary, which is seen as an indication of the growing popularity of the cult of the solar god Ra. He continued the move north by building his (now ruined) pyramid at Abu Rawash, some 8 km to the North of Giza.

It is the northernmost part of the Memphite necropolis.

In 2004, evidence that Djedefra may have been responsible for the building of the Sphinx in the image of his father was reported by French Egyptologist Vassil Dobrev.

**Khafre - Khaf-Re - Khauf-Re - Khafre - Khephren - Rakhaef -
Chephren - Suphis II - Appearing Like Re - (2558 BC - 2532 BC)**



Fourth king of the 4th Dynasty.

His birth name was Khafre, which means "Appearing like Re". He is also sometimes referred to as Khafra, Rakhaef, Khephren or Chephren by the Greeks, and Suphis II by Manetho. He was possibly a younger son of Khufu (Cheops) by his consort, Henutsen, so he was required to wait out the reign of Djedefre, his older brother, prior to ascending to the throne of Egypt. However, there is disagreement on this matter. There is no agreement on the date of his reign; some authors saying it was between 2558 BC and 2532 BC; this dynasty is commonly dated ca. 2650 BC-2480 BC.

Identifying him with Suphis II, Manetho gives his reign as lasting 66 years, but this certainly cannot be substantiated. Modern Egyptologists believe he may have ruled Egypt for a relatively long period, however, of between the 24 years ascribed to him by the Turin Royal Canon papyrus (which was apparently confirmed by an inscription in the mastaba tomb of Prince Nekure), and 26 years. He is thought to have ruled Egypt from about 2520 to 2494 BC.

There are rumors of a problem with the succession of Khafre. Some authorities maintain that Djedefre may have even stole the throne, perhaps as a younger brother of Khafre, and that Khafre may have even murdered him.

Much of this speculation originates from the fact that Djedefre broke with the Giza burial tradition, electing instead to locate his tomb (pyramid) at Abu Rawash. However, there is little real evidence to support such a conclusion, and in fact, Khafre continued Djedefre's promotion of the cult of the sun god Re by using the title the 'Son of the Sun' for himself and by incorporating the name of the god in his own.

It is clearly evident from the fine mastaba tombs of the nobles in his court that Egypt was prosperous while Khafre held the throne. Carved on the walls of the tomb of Prince Nekure, a "king's son", was a will to his heirs. It is the only one of its kind

known from this period, and in it he leaves 14 towns to his heirs, of which at least eleven are named after his father, Khafre.

Though his legacy was divided up among his five heirs, 12 of the towns were earmarked to endow the prince's mortuary cult. We do know that Khafre participated in some foreign trade, or at least diplomacy, for objects dating from his reign have been found at Byblos, north of Beirut, as well as at Tell Mardikh (Ebla) in Syria. He apparently also had diorite quarried at Tashka in Nubia and probably sent expeditions into the Sinai.

Though there are few inscriptions left for us to completely understand the era of Khafre's rule, he did leave behind some of the most important treasures ancient Egypt has to offer.

Besides his [pyramid complex at Giza](#), most Egyptologists believe he also built the [Great Sphinx](#) and that it is his face that adorns this huge statue, which sits just beside his valley temple.

In addition, the life size diorite statue of Khafre found in his valley temple and now located in the Egyptian Antiquities Museum is one of the most magnificent artifacts ever discovered.

Like his father Khufu, Khafre was depicted in fold tradition as a harsh, despotic ruler. Though as late as the New Kingdom, Ramesses II seems to have had no qualms about taking some of the casing from his pyramid at Giza for use in a temple at Heliopolis, by Egypt's Late Period, the cults of the fourth dynasty kings had been revived, and Giza became a focus of pilgrimage.

Khafre's mummy has been lost, but his mortuary temple at Giza yielded one of the finest extant Old Kingdom statues an almost undamaged life-size seated diorite figure of the king enjoying the protection of the god Horus. A statue of Khafre under the protective shadow of a falcon is in the Cairo Museum.

Reference: *Monarchs of the Nile* Aidan Dodson, 1995



Menkaure - Mycerinus - Menhaure - Eternal Like the Souls of Re - (2532 BC - 2503 BC)

Fifth king of the 4th Dynasty



Menkaure with his wife Khamerernebtu II appearing as Hathor (left) and the goddess of the seventeenth nome of Egypt (right)

Menkaure is the son of Khafre and the grandson of Khufu of Dynasty IV. He bore the titles Kakhmet and Hornub. There are doubts that Menkaure could be the son of Khafre, because the Turin Papyrus mentioned a name of a king between Menkaure and Khafre, but the name was smashed. A Middle Kingdom text written on a rock at Wadi Hamamat includes the names of the kings: Khufu, Djedefre, Khafre, Hordedef and Bauefre. This text indicates to some that Hordedef and Bauefre ruled after Khafre. But it seems that their names were not written as kings because Menkaure's names were not mentioned. It has been suggested that Hordedef's name was mentioned because he was a wise educated man in this period and perhaps Bauefre was a vizier.



He built the smallest pyramid at the Giza plateau, and is called [Menkaure is Divine](#). Menkaure's pyramid is two-tone in color: the top half covered with bright white limestone casing, while red Aswan granite was used for the casing on the bottom. E1-Makrizi, the Arab historian named Menkaure's pyramid as the colored pyramid because of the red granite casing. The pyramid stands 66.5m high, which is much smaller than the other two pyramids at Giza. The pyramid is remarkable because it is the only pyramid in Dynasty IV that was cased in 16 layers of granite, Menkaure planned to cover the surface with granite but he could not because of his sudden death.

The pyramid complex of Menkaure was completed by his son and successor Shepseskaf but the temples has architectural additions which were made during Dynasties V and VI. This suggests that the cult of Menkaure was very important and perhaps differed from the cults of Khufu and Khafre. Shepseskaf completed the pyramid complex with mudbrick and left an inscription inside the Valley Temple indicating that he built the temple for the memory of his father.

At the pyramid's entrance, there is an inscription records that Menkaure died on the twenty-third day of the fourth month of the summer and that he built the pyramid. It is thought that this inscription dates to the reign of Khaemwas, son of Ramses II. The name of Menkaure found written in red ochre on the ceiling of the burial chamber in one of the subsidiary pyramids.

When pyramid was explored in the 1830's, a lidless basalt sarcophagus was found in the burial chamber. Inside it was a wooden mummiform coffin inscribed with Menkaure's name. This is curious because mummiform coffins weren't made until much later. Best guess is that the coffin was provided in an attempted restoration during the 26th dynasty (that's 2000 years later!) when there was a renewed interest in the culture of the Old Kingdom.

The wooden coffin and basalt sarcophagus were sent on separate ships to England to end up on display in the British Museum, but a storm at sea sank the boat that was transporting the sarcophagus. It sank to the bottom of the sea and was never recovered.

The sarcophagus was allegedly lost in the Mediterranean between ports of Cartagena and Malta when the ship 'Beatrice' sank after setting sail on October 13, 1838. There still exists the wooden anthropoid coffin found inside the pyramid which bears the name and titles of Menkaure.



Menkaure's main queen was Khamerernebtj II, who is portrayed with him in a group statue found in the Valley Temple. It is believed that she is buried in Giza.

Menkaure ruled for 18 years. There are two inscriptions found in his pyramid complex. The first was a decree bearing the Horus name of Merenre of Dynasty VI. The decree stated that the Valley Temple was in use until the end of the Old Kingdom. The objects found in some of the storage rooms of the temples show that the king's cult was maintained and that the temple had a dual function as a temple and a palace.

The second decree of Pepi II was found on the lower temple vestibule, awarding privileges to the priests of the pyramid city. In the adjacent open court and in the area just east of the temple lie the remains of the Old Kingdom houses. Pepi II's decree indicates that these houses belonged to the pyramid city of Menkaure. Here lived the personnel responsible for maintaining the cult of the deceased king.

The statuary program found inside the complex displays the superb quality of arts and crafts. The triads in Menkaure's valley temple suggest that his pyramid complex was dedicated to Re, Hathor, and Horus. In addition, they show the king's relationship with the gods and are essential to his kingship, indicating both a temple and palace function.

The textual evidence indicates that the high officials had more privileges in his reign than in any other period. They had many statues in their tombs; the inscriptions and the scenes increased and were set on rock-cut tombs. In the tomb of Debhen an inscription was found describing the kindness of Menkaure.

When Debhen came to visit the king's pyramid, he asked the king for permission to build his tomb near the pyramid. The king agreed and even ordered that stones from the royal quarry in Tura should be used in building his tomb. The text also mentions that the king stood on the road by the Hr pyramid inspecting the other pyramid. The name "Hr" was also found written in the tomb of Urkhuu at Giza, who was the keeper of a place belonging to the Hr pyramid. It is not clear what the Hr pyramid is. Is it a name of a subsidiary pyramid, or the name of the plateau? The Debhen texts is a revelation of how the king tried to inspire loyalty by his people giving them gifts.

Menkaure also had a new policy - he opened his palace to the children of his high officials. They were educated and raised with the king's own children. Shepsesbah is one of those children. The textual and archaeological evidence of the Old Kingdom indicates that the palace of the king was located near his pyramid and not at Memphis. Menkaure explored granite from Aswan and he sent expeditions to Sinai. Excavations under the author revealed a pair of statues of Ramses II on the south side of Menkaure's pyramid. The statues were made of granite, and one represents Ramses as king while the other as Atum-Re.

The name of Menkaure was found written on scarabs dated to the 26th Dynasty, which may imply that he was worshipped in this period.

Herodotus mentioned that Menkaure died suddenly and added that there was an oracle from the Buto statue that foretold that he would live for 6 years. Menkaure started to drink, and enjoy every moment of his remaining years. However, Menkaure lived for 12 years, thus disproving the prophecy. Herodotus also said that his daughter committed suicide.

The Greek historian also wrote that the Egyptians loved Menkaure more than his father and grandfather. The Late Period tales were based on Menkaure's reputation during the Old Kingdom. He ruled with justice, gave freedom to his officials to carve statues and make offerings, and stopped the firm rules.

Reference: *Monarchs of the Nile* Aidan Dodson, 1995

Shepseskaf - 'His Soul is Noble' - (2503 BC - 2498 BC)



Shepseskaf was the sixth king of the 4th Dynasty.

Pharaoh Menkaure has died after a 28 year long reign. His son and heir by queen Khamerernebty II, the young Prince Khuenre, has tragically died before he could take to the throne. Menkaure is therefore succeeded by Shepseskaf, a son of Menkaure by an unknown minor wife. Although a half brother to Prince Khuenre, he was not an ideal choice for the role of Pharaoh, as he is not of complete royal blood.

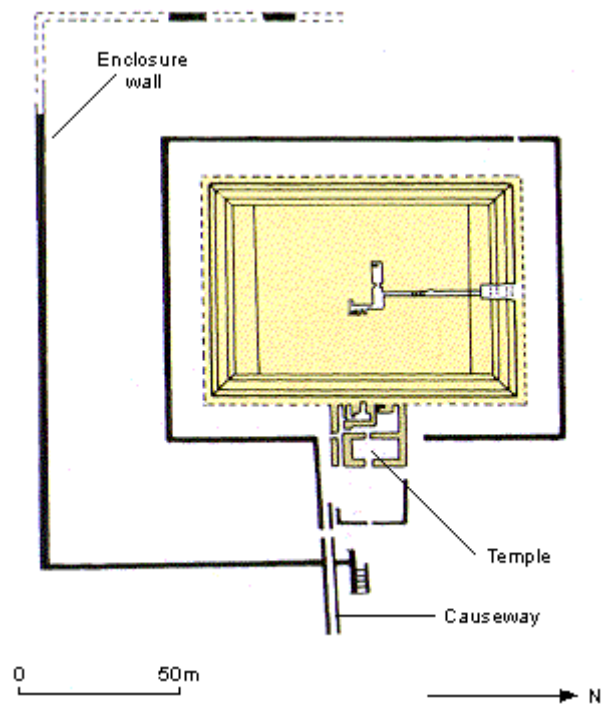
His major wife was Bunefer. He has no known sons and one daughter, Khamaat.

He was in power for just a short period of time. This was another difficult political period, during which there were many confrontations with various priests. Many desired independence and rebelled against Shepseskaf's authority.

Shepseskaf completed his father Menkaure's Pyramid. He chose not to be buried in a Pyramid and as he returned to Saqqara after most of his 4th Dynasty predecessors had either preferred Dashur in the South (Snofru) or Abu Rawash (Djedefre) and Giza (Kheops, Khefren and Mykerinos) in the North to build their funerary monuments. This return to Saqqara has often been interpreted more as a distancing of Giza and of the supposedly oppressive politics followed by Kheops and Khefren, but there are, in fact, no valid arguments that support this theory.

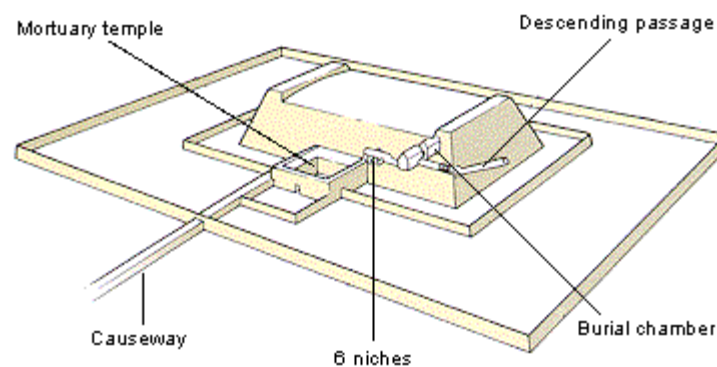
Whatever Shepseskaf's motivations for returning to Saqqara may have been, it is perhaps also telling that he moved to an area in Saqqara that does not appear to have been used before: Saqqara-South. In fact, his tomb is the southern-most royal tomb of Saqqara.

Even in the choice of his funerary monument, Shepseskaf chose not to follow the standard established by his ancestors. His tomb consists of a mastaba-shaped superstructure with a small mortuary temple to the east. No satellite or queen's pyramids appear to have been built.



Map of the tomb and temple of Shepseskaf.

The mastaba, which has earned this monument the name *Mastabat el-Fara'un*, was 99.6 metres long and 74.4 metres broad. It was originally encased in limestone, except for its base course, which was in granite. It had a slope of 70° E and certainly was shaped like a shrine: a rounded top flanked by two almost vertical walls.



Cut-away of the Mastabat el-Fara'un showing the original shape of this rather unique royal tomb.

Source: Lehner, *Complete Pyramids*, p. 139

The mastaba is entered from the north side, from where a corridor descends for 20.95 metres with a slope of $23^{\circ}30'$. At the end of the passage is a horizontal corridor passage followed by a second passage blocked by three portcullises and an antechamber. A short passage to the west goes down into the vaulted burial chamber that measures 7.79 by 3.85 metres and has a height of 4.9 metres. Fragments of the sarcophagus indicate that it was made of a hard dark stone and decorated like

Mykerinos'. To the south of the antechamber a corridor extends with 6 niches to the east, again similar to the niches found in the pyramid of Mykerinos.

The mastaba is enclosed within two mudbrick walls: the first also incorporates a small mortuary temple that had some open courts, an offering hall and a false door, flanked by 5 magazines. The long causeway that extended towards the east has not (yet) been excavated.

After Shepseskaf died, Khentkawes, another child of Menkaure by a minor wife and Shepseskaf's half-sister, married a nobleman named Userkaf, who was the great grandson of Pharaoh Khufu. Upon his marriage to Pharaoh Shepseskaf's half sister Khentkawes, Userkaf was in a strong enough position to be crowned Pharaoh over all Egypt, and begin the 5th Dynasty of Kings.

Userkaf returned to the more traditional pyramid-tomb. From then on, the dimensions and shape of the pyramid, and the temple connected to it, would become more and more standardized.

Reference: *Monarchs of the Nile* Aidan Dodson, 1995

Djedefptah - (2498 - 2494 BC)

Djedefptah is a shadowy figure, and his existence is questionable. It is usual to consider Shepseskaf to be the last pharaoh of the Fourth Dynasty. Manetho however lists a king Tamphthis (this may probably a corrupted form of ptah-djedef), and notes that he reigned for 9 years.

The Turin Canon has an unnamed pharaoh after Shepseskaf who ruled for about two years, and this ruler may be Djedefptah. Very little else is known about him, although he may have been a son of Shepseskaf.

The Fifth Dynasty

The Fifth Dynasty of Egypt is considered part of the Old Kingdom of ancient Egypt. Manetho writes that these kings ruled from Elephantine, but archeologists have found evidence clearly showing that their palaces were still located at Ineb-hedj ("White Walls").

How Pharaoh Userkaf founded this dynasty is not known for certain.

The Papyrus Westcar, which was written during the Middle Kingdom, tells a story of how king Khufu of the Fourth Dynasty was given a prophecy that triplets born to the wife of the priest of Ra in Sakhbu would overthrow him and his heirs, and how he attempted to put these children - named Userkaf, Sahura, and Neferirkara - to death; however in recent years, scholars have recognized this story to be at best a legend, and admit their ignorance over how the transition from one dynasty to another transpired.

During this dynasty, Egyptian religion made several important changes. The earliest known copies of funerary prayers inscribed on royal tombs (known as the [Pyramid Texts](#)) appear.

The cult of the god Ra gains added importance, and kings from Userkaf through Menkauhor built temples dedicated to Ra at or near Abusir.

Then late in this dynasty, the cult of Osiris assumes importance, most notably in the inscriptions found in the tomb of Unas.

Amongst non-royal Egyptians of this time, Ptahhotep, vizier to Djedkare Isesi, won fame for his wisdom; The Maxims of Ptahhotep was ascribed to him by its later copyists.

Non-royal tombs were also decorated with inscriptions, like the royal ones, but instead of prayers or incantations, biographies of the deceased were written on the walls.

As before, expeditions were sent to Wadi Maghara and Wadi Kharit in the Sinai to mine for turquoise and copper, and to quarries northwest of Abu Simbel for gneiss.

Trade expeditions were sent south to Punt to obtain malachite, myrrh, and electrum, and archeological finds at Byblos attest to diplomatic expeditions sent to that Phoenician city.

Finds bearing the names of a several Fifth Dynasty kings at the site of Dorak, near the Sea of Marmara, may be evidence of trade but remain a mystery.

Userkaf - Userkhaf - "His Soul is Powerful" - 2498 B.C. - 2345 B.C.



Userkaf was the founder and first king of the 5th Dynasty.

It is believed that he was father of two pharaohs, Sahure and Neferirkare Kakai, who both succeeded him to the throne. Another less common view, in concordance with a story of the Westcar Papyrus, is that first three rulers of the Fifth dynasty were all brothers, the sons of queen Khentkaus I. He is given a reign of 7 Years by both the Turin King List and Manetho.

His [pyramid complex](#) at Saqqara introduced several new changes from the previous dynasty. In comparison with the tombs of the Fourth dynasty, his pyramid was rather small. Instead, increased focus was put on the mortuary temple, which were more richly decorated than in the previous Fourth dynasty. In the temple courtyard, a colossal statue of the king was raised. The mortuary temple was to the south of the pyramid, not to the east, as was traditional. This is now seen as being due to the increasing importance of the sun god in the south, the temple would be bathed in the sun's rays throughout the day.

Userkaf, as the originator of the fifth dynasty, clearly felt he should associate himself with one of his great predecessors. To achieve this, he build his pyramid complex at Saqqara, as close as possible to that of Djoser. When completed, the pyramid was 161 ft (49 m) high and encased in limestone, though the core was sloppily built and therefore crumbled when this casing was removed by robbers. Although the complex is now ruined and largely inaccessible, limited excavations there have produced a huge pink granite head of Userkaf. Userkaf also built the first of the Solar Temples of Abu-Gurob.

Reference: *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt* Ian Shaw, 2000

Sahure - "He Who is Close to Re" - (2487 - 2477 BC)



The second king of the 5th Dynasty.

Sahure was a son of queen Khentkaus I, who, in her tomb at Giza, is said to have been the "mother of two kings". His father probably was Userkaf.

There are no wives or children known to him and at least no children of his seem to have outlived him, since he was succeeded by his brother, Neferirkare, the first king known to have used separate names.

His Horus name was *Nebkhau*.

It is believed he ruled Egypt from around 2487 BC to 2475 BC. The Turin King List gives him a reign of twelve years. The Palermo stone notes seven cattle counts, which would indicate a reign of at least 13 years if the cattle counts were held biannually (every two years) as this Annal document indicates for the early Fifth Dynasty period.

It is probable that Khentkaus I was the character of Redjedet in the Papyrus Westcar, who according to the magician Djedi, was destined to give birth to the children of Ra and the first kings of the 5th Dynasty. But if Khentkaus I was his mother, a scene in her tomb at Giza showing her with the royal uraeus and beard might indicate that she may have acted as a regent for Sahure.

Most foreign relations during the reign of Sahure were economic, rather than combative. In one scene in his pyramid, we find great ships with Egyptians and Asiatics on board. It is believed they are returning from the port of Byblos in Lebanon with huge cedar trees. For this, we have corroborating evidence in the form of his name on a piece of thin gold stamped to a chair, as well as other evidence of Fifth dynasty king's cartouches found in Lebanon on stone vessels. Other scenes in his temple depict what we are told are Syrian bears.

We also have the first documented expedition to the land of Punt, which apparently yielded a quantity of myrrh, along with malachite and electrum, and because of this, Sahure is often credited with establishing an Egyptian navy. There are also scenes of a raid into Libya which yielded various livestock and showed the king smiting the local chieftains. The Palermo stone also corroborates some of these events and also mentions expeditions to the Sinai and to the exotic land of Punt, as well as to the diorite quarries northwest of Abu Simbel, thus, far into Nubia.

However, this same scene of the Libyan attack was used two thousand years later in the mortuary temple of Pepi II and in a Kawa temple of Taharqa. The same names are quoted for the local chieftain. Therefore, we become somewhat suspicious of the possibility that Sahure was also copying an even earlier representation of this scene.

He apparently built a sun temple, as did most of the 5th Dynasty kings. Its name was Sekhet-re, meaning "the Field of Re", but so far its location is unknown. We know of his palace, called Uetjesneferusahure ("Sahure's splendor soars up to heaven"), from an inscription on tallow containers recently discovered in Neferefre's mortuary temple. It may have been located at Abusir as well. We also know that under Sahure, the turquoise quarries in the Sinai were worked (probably at Wadi Maghara and Wadi Kharit), along with the diorite quarries in Nubia.

Sahure is further attested by a statue now located in New York's Museum of Modern Art, in a biography found in the tombs of Perisen at Saqqara and on a false door of Niankhsakhment at Saqqara, and is also mentioned in the tombs of Sekhemkare and Nisutpunetjer, kings of the Twelfth dynasty at their tombs in Giza.



His pyramid complex was the first built at the new royal burial ground at [Abusir](#) a few kilometres north of Saqqara (though Userkaf had probably already built his solar temple there) and marks the decline of pyramid building, both in the size and quality, though many of the reliefs are very well done.

His pyramid provides us most of the information we know of this king. The reliefs in his mortuary and valley temple depict a counting of foreigners by or in front of the goddess Seshat and the return of a fleet from Asia, perhaps Byblos. This may indicate a military interest in the Near East, but the contacts may have been diplomatic and commercial as well. As part of the contacts with the Near East, the reliefs from his funerary monuments also hold the oldest known representation of a Syrian bear.

When it was excavated in the first years of the 1900s, a great amount of fine reliefs were found to an extent and quality superior to those from the dynasty before. Some of the low relief-cuttings in red granite are masterpieces of their kind and still in place at the site. The construction of the pyramid was on the other hand (like the others from this dynasty) made with an inner core of roughly hewn stones in a step construction held together in many sections with a mortar of mud.

While this was under construction a corridor was left into the shaft where the grave chamber was erected separately and later covered by leftover stone blocks and debris. This working strategy is clearly visible from two unfinished pyramids and was the old style from the Third dynasty now coming back after being temporarily abandoned by the builders of the five great pyramids at Dahshur and Giza during the Fourth dynasty.

Few depictions of the king are known, but in a sculpture he is shown sitting on his throne with a local nome deity by his side.

Today only the inner construction remains partly visible in a pile of rubble originating from the crude filling of debris and mortar behind the casing stones taken away a thousand years ago. The whole inner construction is badly damaged and not possible to access today.

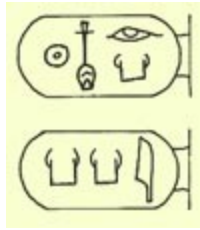
The entrance at the north side is a short descending corridor lined with red granite followed by a passageway ending at the burial chamber. It has a gabled roof made of big limestone layers and fragments of the sarcophagus were found here when it was entered in the early 1800s.

Sahure established the Egyptian navy and sent a fleet to Punt and traded with Palestine. His pyramid at Abusir has colonnaded courts and reliefs of his naval fleet, but his military career consisted mostly of campaigns against the Libyans in the western desert. Reliefs on the walls show evidence for trading expeditions outside Egypt ı ships are shown with both Egyptians and Asiatics on board. These ships are part of an expedition to the Lebanon, searching for cedar logs. This is corroborated by inscriptions found in the Lebanon testifying to an expedition there under Sahure. As part of the contacts with the Near-East, the reliefs from his funerary monuments also hold the oldest known representation of a Syrian bear.

A relief showing a war against Libya is believed by some to be historical and by others to be merely ritual. The Palermo-stone also mentions expeditions to the Sinai and to the exotic land of Punt, as well as to the diorite quarries North-West of Abu Simbel, thus far into Nubia.

Reference: *Monarchs of the Nile* Aidan Dodson, 1995

Neferirkare - "Divine of the Body" - (2477 - 2467 BC)



He was the third king of the 5th Dynasty.

Neferirkare was the second son of Khentkaus I to have ruled Egypt. As with his brother Sahure, it is not known whether Userkaf was his father. Neferirkare was married to a name-sake of his mother's, Khentkaus II. It is not unlikely that Khentkaus II too was related to Khentkaus I. At least two children are believed to have been born of this marriage: Neferefre and Niuserre. Other wives and children are not known.

The length of his reign is unfortunately lost on the Turin King-list and the Palermo-stone breaks off after having recorded a 5th counting, which, if the counting occurred every two years, would mean that Neferirkare at least ruled for 10 years. According to Manetho, his rule lasted for 20 years, a number which appears to be generally accepted.

The Turin Canon, also known as the Turin Royal Canon is a unique papyrus, written in hieratic currently in the Egyptian Museum at Turin, to which it owes its modern name.

The Turin Canon is broken into over 160 often very small fragments, many of which have been lost. When it was discovered in the Theban necropolis by the Italian traveller Bernardino Drovetti in 1822, it seems to have been largely intact, but by the time it became part of the collection of the Egyptian Museum in Turin, its condition had severely deteriorated.

The importance of this papyrus was first recognised by the French Egyptologist Jean-Francois Champollion, who, later followed by Gustavus Seyffarth took up its reconstruction and restoration. Although they succeeded in placing most of the fragments in the correct order, the diligent intervention of these two men came too late and many lacunae still remain.

Written during the long reign of Ramesses II, the papyrus, now 1.7m long and 0.41m, comprises on the *recto* an unknown number of pages that hold a list of names of persons and institutions, along with what appears to be the tax-assessment of each.

It is, however, the *verso* of the papyrus that has attracted the most attention, as it contains a list of gods, demi-gods, spirits, mythical and human kings who ruled Egypt from the beginning of time presumably until the composition of this valuable document.

The beginning and ending of the list are now lost, which means that we are missing both the introduction of the list -if ever there was such an introduction- and the enumeration of the kings following the 17th Dynasty. We therefore do not know for certain when after the composition of the tax-list on the *recto* an unknown scribe used

the *verso* to write down this list of kings. This may have occurred during the reign of Ramesses II, but a date as late as the Dynasty can not be excluded. The fact that the list was scribbled on the back of an older papyrus may indicate that it was of no great importance to the writer.

Neferirkare was the first king to have his birth-name made part of the official titulary, thus adding a second cartouche. He was the first king to have employed both a prenomen and nomen (two names and two cartouches), a custom that later kings would follow.



The hieratic papyrus found at his [pyramid complex](#) are probably his most notable contributions to Egyptology. They were originally discovered in 1893 by local farmers and consist of 300 papyrus fragments. They remained unpublished for some seventy-five years, even as the first archaeologists were excavating Abusir. Only later did a Czech mission, which explored the site in 1976, take full advantage of these documents.

The Neferirkara archive reveals a world of detailed and very professional administration. Elaborate tables provide monthly rosters of duty: for guarding the temple, for fetching the daily income (or 'offerings') and for performing ceremonies including those on the statues, with a special roster for the important Feast of Seker.

Similar tables list the temple equipment, item by item and grouped by materials, with details of damage noted at a monthly inspection. Other records of inspection relate to doors and rooms in the temple building. The presentation of monthly income is broken down by substance, source and daily amount. The commodities are primarily types of bread and beer, meat and fowl, corn and fruit. They also mention a mortuary temple of a little-known king, Raneferef, who's tomb was yet to be discovered but thanks to these papyrus, is now known and has yielded significant discoveries.

He also completed (or modified) the solar-temple built by Userkaf in Abusir. His own solar-temple, called *Set-ib-Re*, has yet to be located.

He was also the second king to erect his funerary monument at Abusir. The seals and papyri discovered in his mortuary temple give some insights into the functioning of this temple. The documents are dated to the end of the 6th Dynasty, which indicates that the cult for the deceased Neferirkare at least lasted until the end of the Old Kingdom.

Reference: *Monarchs of the Nile* Aidan Dodson, 1995

Shepseskare Izi - "Noble is the Soul of Re" - (2467 - 2460 BC)

He was the fourth king of the 5th Dynasty.

Little to nothing is known about Shepseskare nor his relationship to the other kings of the 5th Dynasty. Shepseskare Isi, also spelt Shepseskare, (in Greek known as Sisiris), was Pharaoh of Egypt during the Fifth dynasty, and is thought to have reigned from around 2426 BC - 2419 BC. Both the Turin King List and Manetho suggest that he ruled Egypt for seven years.

Several clay seals dated to his reign have been found at Abusir, and these are about the only witnesses of Shepseskare's reign. It is not known whether he built a pyramid or a solar-temple, although the unfinished pyramid located at Abusir between the pyramid of Sahure and the solar-temple of Userkaf, has, by some, been credited to him.

Reference: *Monarchs of the Nile* Aidan Dodson, 1995

Neferefre - "Beautiful is Re" - (2460 - 2453 BC)

He was the fifth king of the 5th Dynasty.

Neferefre was the first son of Neferirkare and Khentkaus II to come to the throne. The Turin King-list is too fragmentary to provide us with the length of Neferefre's reign.

He built a solar-temple named Hetep-Re, which has not yet been discovered, and, at Abusir, started with the building of his own [pyramid complex](#) which was left unfinished.

Because of the premature death of Neferefre, his successor hastily completed work on Neferefre's pyramid at Abusir, which acquired the form of a mastaba. Although it may share the same resemblance to a mastaba tomb, it is not situated north-south, and it is not rectangular in shape, but square on all sides.

Known as the "Unfinished Pyramid", it stands just seven meters high, but from the constructed portions, the walls slope at a 64° angle. Similarly to other sites of other Ancient Egyptian pyramids, the burial site of Neferefre contains more than one pyramid, and his lines up the three pyramids, similarly to the Great Pyramids.

Artifacts found at the sight show that the name of his pyramid is "Divine is Neferefre's Power." All the other buildings of Neferefre's mortuary complex were erected under the reign of his brother, Nyuserre Ini. While exploring ruins of the mortuary complex, a Czech archaeological expedition discovered papyri of temple accounts, statues of the king, decorated plates and many seal prints.

Pieces of mummy wrappings and bones were also found, which were discovered to be the remains of Neferefre. The anthropological analysis of his mummy reveals him to have died in his early twenties, between 20 and 23 Years, according to Verner. This evidence accords well for a king who died relatively soon into his reign.

Reference: *Monarchs of the Nile* Aidan Dodson, 1995

Niuserre Ini - Niuserre Izi - " Possessed of Re's Power" - (2453 - 2422 BC)



He was the sixth king of the Fifth Dynasty.

Niuserre was the second son of Neferirkare and Khentkaus II to have ascended to the throne. He was married to a woman named Reputneb, of whom a statue was discovered in the valley-temple connected to his and Neferirkare's pyramid complex. It is not known whether he had any children (that out-lived him).

The Turin King-list is somewhat damaged at the point where Niuserre's name is mentioned, and only allows us to state that he ruled for more than 10 years. The 44 years credited to him by Manetho is considered unreliable. The representation of a Sed-festival found in his solar-temple may indicate that he ruled at least for 30 years.

An inscription found in the Sinai shown Niuserre triumphant over his enemies. It is debatable whether this inscription refers to an actual victory of Niuserre, or whether it was merely symbolic. It does, however, show that Niuserre was active in the Sinai.

He built a solar-temple, named Shesepu-ib-re, in Abu Gurab, a kilometre or more to the North of Abusir. Not only is this the biggest and most complete solar-temple, it is also the only one that was constructed completely of stone. The many finely carved

reliefs that remain show the king during a Sed-festival and the world as created by the solar god, with representations of the seasons and the provinces of Egypt. With the reign of Niuserre, the solar-cult appears to have come to its summit.

The sanctuary consisted of an entrance hall that was leading to a court of 100x75 m / 330x250 ft. in size which was surrounded by a stone wall. In the middle of the courtyard stood a huge obelisk, a stone that looked like the modern-day Washington Monument. The obelisk was the cultic symbol for Re, the sun-god.

Remains of the sun temple of King Niuserre in Abu Gurob





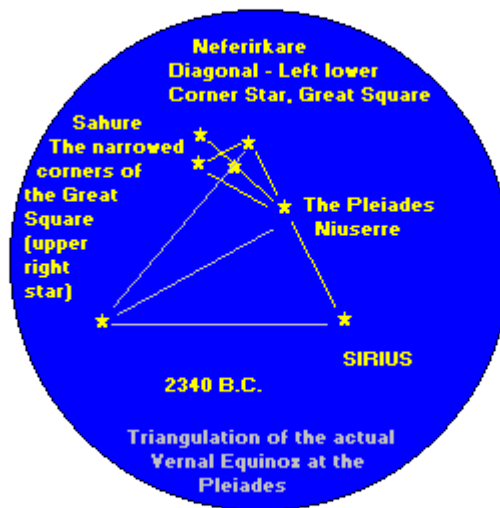
[The Pyramid of Niuserre](#)

The pyramid-complex of Niuserre is located at Abusir, between the pyramids of Sahure and Neferirkare. Instead of building his own valley temple, he had his pyramid complex connected to the valley temple of Neferirkare. His two wives, Reputneb and Khentikus, were buried near him at Abusir.





His Cartouche



Nile Pyramid Complexes

Astronomical Triangulations of Aries, Equinoxes,
Solstices and the Duat of Pharaonic Egypt

Reference: *Monarchs of the Nile* Aidan Dodson, 1995

Menkauhor - "Eternal are the Souls of Re"



Menkauhor was the seventh king of the 5th Dynasty.

His birth name was Kalu. According to the Turin King-list he ruled for some eight years. References fairly consistently give his reign as lasting from about 2421 or 2422 until 2414. He never achieved the level of fame of the other kings of the 5th dynasty. His reign is attested by an inscription in the Sinai and a seal from Abusir.

The relationship of Menkauhor with his predecessors or successors is not known. However, it is likely that he was either the brother or son of Niuserre, his predecessor. If he was Niuserre's son, it would probably have been by Niuserre's chief queen, Neput-Nebu. It is also likely that he was the father of Djedkare, who followed him to the throne. If not, he was almost certainly Djedkare's brother, with Niuserre being both king's father, or Djedkare's cousin, with Djedkare being the son of Neferefre, and Menkauhor being the son of Niuserre.

He is reputed as having sent his troops to Sinai in order to acquire materials for the construction of his tomb.

He was the last pharaoh to build a sun temple. His solar-temple, called Akhet-Re, and his pyramid are mentioned in texts from private tombs. This dynasty was famous for their solar temples, and Menkauhor's temple is probably located at either Abusir or Saqqara. It would have probably been the last such temple built, however, because his successors appear to have drifted away somewhat from the solar cult.

Menkauhor's pyramid has not been positively identified, but if the assumption that his pyramid is to be located at Dashur is correct, this would imply a departure from Abusir. However, some Egyptologists seem to strongly believe that his pyramid is the "Headless Pyramid", located in North Saqqara east of Teti's complex. There is

mounting evidence to support this conclusion. B. G. Ockinga, for example argues that during the 18th Dynasty the Teti complex may have been associated with a cult belonging to a deified Menkauhor. Wherever it is located, his pyramid was called "Divine are the (cult) places of Menkauhor".

His reign is attested by an inscription in the Sinai at Magharah, indicating that he continued to quarry stone in that location as did his predecessors and successors. Given the lack of information on this king, we can also probably make some assumptions based on the activities of those predecessors and successors. For example, while he have no inscriptions as evidence, both Niuserre and Djedkare quarried stone northwest of Aswan, so it is likely that Menkauhor did as well.

It is also highly likely that he continued commercial and diplomatic relations with Byblos, as did both Niuserre and Djedkare, and in fact we do find a few objects in the area near Dorak bearing his name. It is also likely that he had some sort of dealings with Nubia, but whether he sent expeditions to Punt, as did Niuserre and Djedkare, is unknown.

Otherwise, Menkauhor is also attested to by a small alabaster statue that is now located in the Egyptian museum in Cairo and by a relief of Tjutju adoring King Menkauhor and other divinities. This relief, owned by the Louvre, has been on loan to the Cleveland Museum of Art.



There is also have a seal bearing his name that was found at Abusir.

Djedkare Izezi - Djedkare Isesi - 'The Soul of Ra Endures' - (2414 - 2375 BC)

Djedkare was the eighth king of the 5th Dynasty.

The relationship of Djedkare with his predecessors or successors is not entirely known, but he was probably the son of Menkauhor, his predecessor. If not, then he may have been Menkauhor's brother by Niuserre, or even Menkauhor's cousin by Neferfre, though that seems unlikely. It is possible that his principle queen was Meresankh IV, but her tomb is located in the main Saqqara necropolis. A pyramid believed to be that of a queen or consort of Djedkare just next to that of his in South Saqqara has no inscriptions to provide us with evidence of her name. According to an Abusir Papyrus, Djedkare perhaps lived in South Saqqara near his pyramid.

According to the Turin King List he ruled for 28 years, but records found in the mortuary temple of Neferefre at Abusir indicate that he ruled for at least 30 years.

Actually, the dates on the Turin King List have been read by some Egyptologists as giving him a reign of 38 years. Manetho records 44 years for this king, but the mummy found in his pyramid at South Saqqara and believed to be Djedkare is thought to be that of about a 50 year old man. Given this king's apparently long reign, it is surprising we have so little information about him.

Djed-ka-re was the king's throne name, meaning "Soul of Re Endureth". His birth name was Isesi (Asosi). He distanced himself somewhat from the earlier rulers of this dynasty by not building a sun temple and having himself buried at Saqqara rather than Abusir.

Djedkare's name has been found in the Sinai at Maghara, demonstrating a continued Egyptian interest in this rich region. Two expeditions at ten year intervals are recorded there. We also find him mentioned at the quarries northwest of Aswan, and at Abydos and in Nubia. In Nubia, we find his expedition to Punt mentioned in a graffito found at the site of Tomas. He apparently also maintained commercial and diplomatic contacts with Byblos. He is further attested to in the biographies of Itush at and also Gemni at Saqqara.

He is mentioned in a number of letters including one from Pepy II. We find references on vessels mentioning his first Sed Festival and he is also referenced on a dedication inscription to Niuserre found at Abusir. We know of a few officials of his reign, including Ptahhotep, one of his viziers. However, this is probably not the famous author of the Maxims, but either his father or grandfather.

His reign is marked by some important changes. For example, the solar cult, although not abandoned, loses some of its importance and predominance, and the power of the central government is weakened to the advantage of the provincial administration. Another important change that occurred during Djedkare's reign is the return to Saqqara as a burial place. This does not mean, however, that the funerary temples of Abusir were abandoned. The larger part of the papyri found in the funerary temple of Neferirkare are dated to Djedkare, and it is clear that he did much work maintaining the Abusir area.

His heir was his son, Prince Remkuy, who died before he assumed the throne.

Reference: *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Ian Shaw 2000

Unas - Wenis (2375 2345 BC)

Unas was the ninth and last king of the 5th Dynasty and what some believe to be the end of the Golden Age of the Old Kingdom.

The 6th Dynasty would finally be the end of Egypt's grand beginning, as the country would then slip into the troubling First Intermediate Period.

Unas was his birth name, but he is also referred to as Unis, Ounas and Wenis. His Horus name was Wadj-tawy which means "Horus, the flourishing one of the Two Lands".

According to the Turin King list, Unas ruled for 30 years, or perhaps slightly more of part of the number is in the lacuna, which is confirmed by Manetho, who recorded 33 years. He probably ruled Egypt between 2375 and 2345 BC.

Wenis had two wives, Queen Nebet, who was the mother of Prince Wenisakh, and Queen Khenut. It has been proposed that Iput the first was his daughter. Both of Unas' Queens were buried in mastaba tombs outside of Unas' pyramid complex which, in itself is unusual since often in this period the Queens would be buried in smaller pyramids near their husband's.

His reign is not well attested therefore we know little about this king despite his fairly well preserved [funerary complex](#) at the southwest corner of the Step Pyramid of Djoser at Saqqara. It now lies in ruins on the Saqqara Plateau.



Beneath the rubble, in the burial chamber, we find one of the finest examples of the Pyramid Text inscriptions hewn in the polished stone walls and ceiling.



Rise up my father, great king
so that you may sit in front of them.
The cavern of the broad sky is opened to you
so that you may stride in the sunshine.
Stand up for me, Osiris, my father.
I am your son. I am Horus.
I have come that I might cleanse and purify you,
that I might preserve you and collect your bones.
I say this for you.



While Unas' pyramid is the smallest of the royal pyramids build during the Old Kingdom, it was the first that we know of to have its internal walls inscribed with the various (128) spells making up the [Pyramid Text](#). The texts, meant to aid the pharaoh's soul on its journey to the next world, would adorn the walls of many future pyramids and tombs and is the earliest large religious composition known from ancient Egypt.

Unas' pyramid also established the typical plan of the internal chambers for pyramids that would be used through the end of the 6th Dynasty.

In death, King Unas is identified with the gods Ra and Osiris, and referred to as Osiris Unas. E. A. Wallis Budge, in his "The Gods of the Egyptians", also tells us that he was called Unas, the Slayer and Eater of Gods.

He was apparently worshipped around Saqqara for many years after his death.

Osiris was originally a local deity of the Eastern delta, but sometime around the reign of Unas his worship became much more widespread. We believe Maspero discovered parts of Unas' mummy in 1880, which are now in the Cairo Museum.

It is not believed that Unas left an heir, though he may have one time had a son named Ptahshepses, and therefore there was a short period of political instability prior to Teti, the first ruler of the 6th Dynasty, ascent to the throne. Teti's wife, Iput, was possibly a daughter of Unas, and his vizier Kagemni probably also worked under Unas. Furthermore, a pink granite gateway in Unas' mortuary temple bears the inscription of the names and titles of Teti, indicating that part of the temple was completed after Unas's death. This evidence suggests that there may not have been a true break between the 5th and 6th Dynasties.

We find scenes from his causeway that links his mortuary temple and valley temple depicting the moving by barge of granite columns from the quarries at Aswan to his mortuary temple, but we also find scenes of emaciated people. These latter scenes may show the effects of a famine that might have been the cause of the political decline that ended the Old Kingdom. There are also scenes of Asiatic traders arriving in Egypt by boat, perhaps from Byblos, as well as scenes of markets, hunting in the desert and a small vignette of desert life. We believe that Unas probably pursued a policy of diplomatic contact both with Byblos and Nubia. He also apparently was also responsible for building activities at Elephantine near modern Aswan, as well as Saqqara. At Elephantine, an inscription also shows a giraffe and other exotic animals that were apparently bought to Egypt during his reign. Another drawing found on a discovered vase shows battle scenes during his reign.

His name has been found in Elephantine, at the Southern border of Egypt (Aswan), and also on an alabaster vessel found in Byblos, the latter perhaps indicating some commercial or diplomatic activities between Egypt and the Near East during this period. He seems not to have left any apparent heirs after his death, which may have resulted in some political instability following his death.



An inscription raised at Elephantine shows a giraffe that was brought to Egypt with other exotic animals for ancient Egyptians, during Wenis' reign when successful trade expeditions were conducted with neighboring nations.

Sixth Dynasty - 2323-2152 BCE

All kings of the 6th dynasty, except for Merenre II and Nitocris, are attested by archaeological sources. Merenre II and Nitocris are only known through the king-lists and Manetho. No known monuments give their names and they are not even mentioned in inscriptions of high officials. Because the king-lists often give Merenre II the same titulary as Merenre I, it is believed that at least his titulary may be the result of a mistake.

The Turin King-list makes a summation of regnal years for the first five dynasties, before listing the kings of the 6th through 8th dynasties. This may suggest that with the 6th Dynasty, a new royal house came to power. The relationship between the founder of the 6th Dynasty and his predecessor is debated. It is believed by some that he was married to his predecessor's daughter.

From a cultural point of view, the 6th Dynasty is the continuation of the end of the 5th Dynasty. The kings continued to commission pyramids for their mortuary cult. The pyramids and mortuary temples of this period are of a standard size and basically have the same layout. The burial chamber, antechamber and entrance corridor of these pyramids are inscribed with Pyramid Texts, following the example set by Unas of the 5th Dynasty. Most kings of the 6th Dynasty also chose to build their funerary monument in Saqqara and here too they were following the example of the last two kings of the 5th Dynasty.

Governmental reforms were intended to strengthen the residence's hold on the rest of the country. It is often claimed that the policy of instating local governors in the provinces eventually caused the downfall of this dynasty and of the Old Kingdom.

It can indeed be noted that during the 1st Intermediate Period, the power of these local rulers appears to have increased, to the detriment of the central government.

The long reign of Pepi II is also often considered the cause of the end of the Old Kingdom.

In this view, the elderly king's court was the stage of intrigue and plot, with different members of the royal family and some high ranking officials conspiring to get a grasp on the government.

It must, however, be noted that there is no evidence to support this "romantic" fantasy. Even if the ageing Pepi II were unable to rule the country by himself, the central administration was organised well enough to govern in his place.

It is believed more and more that changes in climate and a lower inundation of the Nile are likely to have played an important part in the downfall of the dynasty.

Teti - "He Who Pacifies The Two Lands" - 2323-2291 B.C.



Teti was the first ruler of the 6th dynasty.

Egypt's 6th Dynasty marks the descent into the darkness of the First Intermediate Period in Egypt's history. At times, the rule of these kings is somewhat obscure, including that of Teti (sometimes also known as Othoes, from Manetho), who was the first king and the founder of the 6th Dynasty. His reign settled some of the accession problems following the death of Unas. In fact, he adapted the Horus name, *Seheteptawy*, which means, "He who pacifies the Two Lands".

He ruled Ancient Egypt from around 2345 until 2333 BC, though of course Egyptologists differ on these dates, as well as his length of rule. The Turin King's List gives him less than one year's rule, which most scholars find very unlikely. Manetho suggests thirty, to thirty-three years, but there is no evidence of his jubilee festival, so this also seems unlikely. The latest known date from Teti's reign is that of the "sixth census", an event that took place on average every two years, or possibly every year and a half. Therefore many Egyptologists give him a reign of twelve years.

His wife, Queen Iput I, was probably the daughter of King Unas who was the last king of the 5th Dynasty. The queen was the mother of Teti's heir, King Pepi I. Historians believe that she is the one that gave him the royal power, legitimizing his rule. She is buried in her own pyramid near Teti's at Saqqara. Other wives included Khuit and Weret-Imtes. Along with his son, Pepi I, he also probably had another son named Teti-anh-km, which means "Teti-anh the Black", and a daughter named Seshseshet (also called Watet-khet-her). Her marriage to the vizier Mereruka probably furthered Teti's political stability, creating good will within the increasingly powerful nobility.

Almost all the major court officials of King Unas remained in power during Teti's reign, including his other vizier, Kagemni. As stated, we know little about Teti's reign, though there is evidence that quarry work was performed on his behalf at Hatnub near Abydos, and that he maintained commercial and diplomatic relations with Byblos. He also may have maintained relations with Punt and Nubia, at least as far south as the site of Tomas in northern Nubia.

We have evidence of his exempting the temple at Abydos from taxes, and he was the first ruler to be particularly associated with the cult of Hathor at Dendera.

Teti granted more lands to Abydos and his name was inscribed in Hatnub. He built a [pyramid in Saqqara](#) which is called by modern Egyptians the "Prison Pyramid". Egyptologists discovered a statue of him made of black and pink granite. The statue is located at the Egyptian museum.

The king was murdered by his guards for mysterious reasons, according to the Manetho. However, there is no other evidence of this violent death, though it might help to explain the possible short rule of a King Userkare, possibly between that of of Teti and his son, Pepi I. It is interesting to note that this king, arbitrarily left out of most modern lists of kings, is better attested to than most histories of Egypt allow.

Many references today point out that the only references we have for Userkare are from the Turin and Abydos king's lists, but this is not so. Other documents bearing his name have survived, including one referring to workers at Qau el-Kebir south of Asyut who were possibly engaged in building his tomb. Userkare means the "Ka of Ra is powerful", and therefore has a strong resonance of the 5th Dynasty. Therefore, Userkare may have been a surviving rival of Teti from the 5th Dynasty. However, he may have also simply been a regent associated with Queen Iput after Teti's death, as Pepi I may have been too young to ascend the throne at that time.

Reference: *Monarchs of the Nile* Aidan Dodson, 1995

Userkare - "The Soul of Ra is Strong" - (2333 BC 2332 BC)

He was the second king of the Sixth Dynasty and an usurper to the throne.

Userkare may have been a royal claimant from the Fifth dynasty but he was certainly a rival to Teti for the throne. Since Manetho claims that Teti was killed by his bodyguards, theories of conspiracy have been put forward that Userkare was the leader of this conspiracy who then proceeded to seize the throne. The recently discovered South Saqqara Stone document from Pepi II's reign confirms his existence and gives him a reign of 2 to 4 Years. Teti's son, Pepi I, eventually managed to oust Userkare and succeed his murdered father.

In the Turin King List, there is a lacuna between Teti and Pepi I Meryre, large enough to have fit an entry for Userkare. Userkare is apparently mentioned in several king-lists.

Userkare started work on some larger building projects, as shown by an inscription mentioning his workforce. However, no pyramid-complex has been identified for him presumably because of the shortness of his reign.

Reference: Wikipedia

Pepi I - Meryre - "Beloved of Re" - (2332 BC 2283 BC)



Pepi I was the third king of the 6th Dynasty.

The throne name Meryre means "Beloved of Re".

This was a period that would eventually fall into the abyss of the First Intermediate Period. Pepi I was this pharaoh's birth name, though we may also find him listed as Pepy I, Piopi I, Pipi and the Greek Phiops. His throne name was Mery-re, meaning "Beloved of Re", though he actually used the throne name, Nefersahor during the first half of his reign, later changing it to Mery-re. He ruled Egypt from about 2332 through 2283 BC. He probably ascended the throne as an early age, and appears to have ruled for some 50 years (or at least 40 years).

It is entirely possible that Pepi I did not follow his father to the throne. Kings Lists include the name of a King Userkara between that of Teti and Pepi I, and it may be that this king usurped the throne for a short time.

He was probably the son of Teti and his queen, Iput I. Though he may have had at least six, the wives of Pepi I that we know of were Ankhnesmerire I and II (Sometimes also found as Meryre-ankh-nas), who were the daughters of an influential official (Probably governor of the region) at Abydos named Khui. Pepi I made his brother-in-law, we believe a son of Khui named Djau, vizier.

A woman named Were-Imtes may have been his first wife but some Egyptologists have suggested that she might not have been his wife at all. It may have been Were-Imtes who plotted a conspiracy against her husband from the harem, but she was found out and punished. This happened in the twenty-first cattle census, or about year 42 of the king's rule. An accomplice in this plot might have been Rewer, a vizier of Pepi I who's name has been erased from his tomb. However, Callender has suggested that the conspiracy was not by one of Pepi's queens, but was instead a plot by perhaps

the mother of the mysterious King Userkare. There is considerable confusion between the explanations provided by various Egyptologists about this conspiracy.

Apparently, he married Ankhnesmerire I late in his rule, perhaps even after the harem conspiracy, and may have married her younger sister after the first sister's death, but this is by no means clear. His sons, Merenre (by Ankhnesmerire I) and Pepi II (by Ankhnesmerire II) would rule Egypt through the end of the 6th Dynasty.



Ankhnesmerire II holds the infant Pepi II

He also had a daughter by Ankhnesmerire I called Neith, who would later marry her half brother Pepi II. It appears that Pepi II was born either just before or soon after Pepi I's death. Pepi I may have had a number of other wives, including a Nebuunet (Nebwenet) and Inenek-Inti, who's small pyramids are near his at South Saqqara. An inscription has also been found documenting another queen, perhaps from Upper Egypt, named Nedjeftet. Other family members, though we are not so sure of their relationships, probably included a woman named Meretites, and another woman named Ankhesenpepi (or Ankhnesmerire) III. In June 2000 Dr. Zahi Hawass announced the discovery of another pyramid that has been discovered by the French team near Pepi I's that appears to be that of Ankhnesmerire II, though in this report she is referred to as Ankhes-en Pepi.

At least four statues of the king have survived, including the earliest known life size sculpture in metal. This statue came from the temple of Hierakonpolis (Nikhen) in upper Egypt and is made of copper. Found with it was also a copper statue of his young son and future king, Merenre. Other statues include a small green statue of the king probably making offerings to gods, and a small alabaster statue of Pepi I holding the royal crossed flail and scepter (crook).



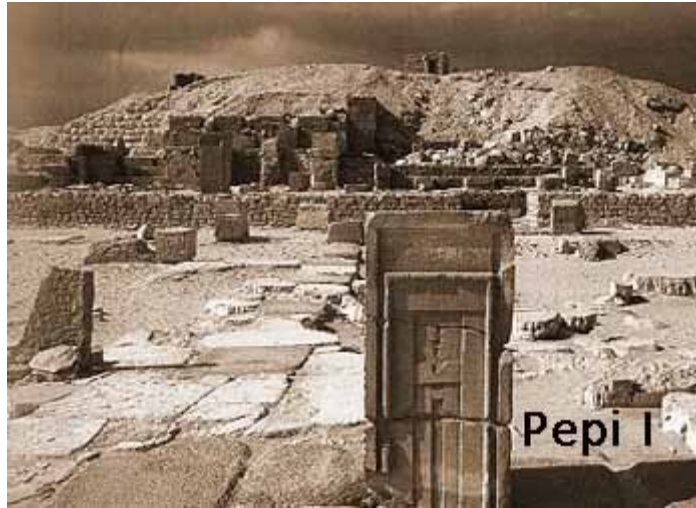
Copper statue of Pepi I and Merenre

The reign of Pepi saw the rising influence and wealth of nobles outside the royal court, a condition that perhaps had much to do with a decline into the First Intermediate Period. These nobles built fine tombs for themselves and often boasted of privileges resulting from friendship with Pepi I.

Pepi I initiated a number of trading and other expeditions, often for fine stone to be used in his many building projects. One inscription found at the alabaster quarries at Hatnub is dated to year 50 of his reign. It refers to the 25th cattle count, which was a biennial event. He was also active at the Wadi Maghara turquoise and copper quarries in the Sinai, the greywacke and siltstone quarries of Wadi Hammamat, where his first Sed Festival is mentioned. We believe he also maintained diplomatic and commercial relations with Byblos and Ebla.

He may have also sent expeditions to the mines of Sinai and as far away as Palestine. The expedition into Palestine was led by a person named Weni the Welder (Uni?) and involved landing troops from the sea. A single inscription is the only document of the five campaigns led under Pepi I Palestine, the Land of the Sand Dwellers as the Egyptians called the regions east of Egypt.

Pepi I probably did considerable building but little of it remains, as such. Some of his building projects were probably incorporated into later projects, but he did leave behind many inscriptions. Building projects of Pepi I include the remains of a chapel (Hwt-ka) at Bubastis, as well as projects at Elephantine and Abydos. He may have carried out work at Dendara too.



[The Pyramids of Pepi I & II](#)

He built his pyramid at South Saqqara and the Pyramid Text inscribed on the pyramid walls were the first to be found by Egyptologists, though not the first recorded in a pyramid. This pyramid was called Mn-nfr, meaning (Pepi is) established and good". The corruption of this name by classical writers provided our modern name for Egypt's ancient capital, Memphis. His palace may have been very near his pyramid in South Saqqara.

Pepi is further attested to by decrees found at Dahshure (now in Berlin) and Coptos. He was mentioned in biographies of Weni in his tomb at Abydos, Djaw from his tomb at Abydos, Ibi in his tomb at Deir el-Gabrawi, Meryankhptahmeryre in his tomb at Giza, Qar in his tomb at Edfu and the biography on a tomb at Saqqara by an unknown person.



There are a number of interesting questions to be answered about this period. Unas, the last king of the 5th Dynasty began to distance himself from the sun cult so closely connected to the earlier dynasty rulers. However, he did not seem to completely withdraw from this cult. But by the time of Teti, the first ruler of the 6th Dynasty, ties seem to have been severed. He was murdered, we are told and then we find perhaps a

new king usurping the throne of Egypt named Userkare. His name means the "Ka of Ra is powerful", reflecting back on the old sun cult.

When Pepi I does ascend the throne, perhaps only after a year of rule by Userkare, he has the name of Userkare removed wherever possible, as one might imagine he would under the circumstances. However, Pepi I himself is next the subject of a plot, who at least a few Egyptologists believe might have been initiated by the mother of Userkare. Most resources explain the murder of Teti, the ascension to the throne of Userkare and the plot against Pepi I as three different events, but could much of the trouble of this period have been the results of the pharaohs' abandonment of the sun cult? We also see Pepi I reaching out to the power structure of Abydos, perhaps as allies. This is all simply speculation, historical fiction if you will allow, but the point being is that there is much left to be learned about this period of Egypt's history.

Reference: [Egypt Tour](#)

Merenre - Nemtyemsaf I - (2283 - 2278 BC) - "Beloved of Re"



He was the fourth king of the 6th dynasty

This copper statue, found with a much larger copper statue of Pepi I, has long been assumed to be of Merenre and a boy or young man. However, it has been questioned lately whether it is instead a statue of Pepi II. These are believed to be the oldest, large copper statues ever found, but some are now questioning whether the statue of the boy is actually that of Merenre, or rather a young Pepi II.



There is also a very small sphinx of Merenre in the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh.

Merenre, sometimes referred to as Merenre I as there was a much later king by the same name, was the third ruler of Egypt's 6th Dynasty. As the oldest living son of Pepi I, he succeeded his father, we believe, at a fairly young age, and probably died unexpectedly young, perhaps between his fifth and ninth year of rule. He was succeeded by his younger half brother, Pepi II. The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt places the years he ruled as 2287-2278 BC while Chronicle of the Pharaohs gives him from 2283 until 2278.

Merenre was this king's throne name, which means "Beloved of Re". He is sometimes also referred to as Merenra. His birth name was Nemty-em-sa-f, which means, "Nemty is his Protection". His Horus name was Ankh-khau.

His mother was Ankhnesmerire I (Ankhesenpepi I), who, along with her younger sister by the same name, married Pepi I in the later part of his rule. Labrousse, who's team is excavating in South Saqqara where Merenre's pyramid is located, now believes that Ankhnesmerire II (Ankhesenpepi II), married Merenre. She was a late wife of Pepi I, Merenre's father, and by him, the mother of Pepi II, Merenre's half brother. She may have not been as old, or much older than Merenre, but sometimes working out relationships is interesting. Not only would she be Merenre's queen, but also his stepmother and aunt.

Pepi II would not only be his half brother and his cousin, but also his stepson. In addition, the Labrousse team excavating at Saqqara now believes that a [Queen Ankhesmerire III \(Ankhesenpepi III\)](#) who's pyramid is located very near Pepi I's was a daughter of Merenre, and became the wife of Pepi II. Lets see. That would make her Pepi II's wife, niece and if Ankhesmerire II was her mother, also his half sister. He had another daughter named Ipwet (Iput II) who's pyramid is also in the South Saqqara pyramid field.

Merenre may have served as his father's coregent for a few years prior to Pepi I's death. Uni (Weni?), who had worked under Pepi I, continued to make expeditions, and the governor of Aswan, Harkhuf, also led expeditions into Africa. Around, his ninth regnal year, Merenre himself visited Aswan to receive a group of southern chieftains. It is interesting to note that this was a time when new people, who archaeologists refer to as the Nubian C Group, were migrating from the south into northern Nubia. Because of the growing relationship with Nubia during this period,

merenre also attempted to improve travel in the first cataract region which was navigated by way of the Dunqul Oasis and canals.

The Nubian rulers are said to have helped by supplying the wood needed to construct the barges. (Since there was no wood in Lower Nubia, they would have had to procure it from sources much farther south). At the same time the Lower Nubian rulers seem also to have profited greatly by sending their fighting men to Egypt for hire. By the end of the Old Kingdom (ca. 2150 BC), the Egyptian armies were mainly composed of Nubian mercenaries, many of whom would ultimately settle in Egypt, marry Egyptian women, and become assimilated into the Egyptian population. During the Old Kingdom, Egyptian texts speak of a land in Upper Nubia called "Yam." Besides troops from "Wawat, Irtjet, and Setju" (Lower Nubia), troops from Yam, too, were hired for service in the Egyptian army. The only source that provides any real information about Yam is a biography of the Aswan governor, Harkhuf, preserved in his tomb at Aswan. Harkhuf tells us that, on behalf of the pharaohs Merenre and Pepi II, he led four expeditions to Yam, each of which took eight months.

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Merenre, like his predecessors, maintained diplomatic and commercial relations with Byblos, and we know from inscriptions and tomb biographies that he had alabaster quarried from Hatnub and greywacke and siltstone from Wadi Hammamat. A copper statue of Merenre as a young boy was found with a much larger copper statue of his father, Pepi I. These are believed to be the oldest, large copper statues ever found, but some are now questioning whether the statue of the boy is actually that of Merenre, or rather a young Pepi II. There is also a very small sphinx of Merenre in the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh.



Merenre is further attested to by a Box (Hippopotamus ivory) in Paris, Louvre Museum, a rock inscriptions near Aswan, the inscriptions on an ivory mother monkey that was probably a gift to an official, decrees of the king found at the pyramid temple of Menkawre and in biographies of Uni (Weni) in his tomb at Abydos, Djaw from his tomb also at Abydos, The tomb of Harkhuf at Elephantine, The tomb of Ibi at Deir el-Gabrawi, the Tomb of Qar at Edfu, and an unknown persons tomb at Saqqara.

He is also mentioned in an inscription in the tomb of Maru at Giza (though this inscription is now in Brussels). Recently another inscription has also been found by a Polish team that mentions Merenre on a rock wall at Deir el-Bahari on the West Bank at Luxor (ancient Thebes).

Merenre was probably buried in [his pyramid at South Saqqara](#), though apparently because of his unexpected death, this pyramid was not yet completed. Until fairly recently, it was believed that the first ever mummy was that of Merenre I, though in reality the mummy found in his pyramid may not have been that of Merenre. Nevertheless, in 1997, excavations began at Hierakonopolis revealing a large predynastic cemetery full of older mummies. However, if the mummy is indeed that of Merenre, it would remain the oldest know royal mummy.



The mummy discovered by Gaston Maspero in 1881, while working at the pyramid of Merenre I at Saqqara South, presents us with somewhat of a problem with regard to its identification.

Based on the place where it was discovered, in the black granite sarcophagus inside the pyramid, it has been identified as belonging to Merenre I. If this identification is correct, this mummy would be the oldest complete royal mummy known to us today.

An important part of the problem is the fact that the current whereabouts of the mummy are unknown, making it impossible to examine it with more modern tools and equipment than was available in the late 19th and the early 20th century.

Reference: [Egypt Tour](#)

Pepi II - Pepy II - Piopi II - Phiops II - Neferkare
"Beautiful is the Soul of Re"

He was the fifth ruler of the 6th dynasty.

According to the Turin King-list, he ruled for over 90 years, which appears to be confirmed by Manetho, who recorded 94 years. This would make Pepi II the longest ruling king of Ancient Egypt. Some doubt has however been shed on this high number, and some researchers believe that it was the result of a miss-reading of 64.

However, because of the onset of the First Intermediate Period, the latter part of his reign was probably ineffectual, perhaps at least somewhat due to his advanced age. While the power of the nomarchs grew, the power of pharaoh dissolved. With no central power, local nobles began raiding each other's territories.

His mother Ankhnesmerire II most likely ruled as regent in the early years of his reign.



Ankhnesmerire I - Pepe II

Isis - Horus

An alabaster statuette in the Brooklyn Museum depicts a young Pepi II, in full kingly regalia, sitting on the lap of his mother. Despite his long reign, this piece is one of only three 3D representations (i.e. statuary) in existence of this particular king. She may have been helped in turn by her brother Djau, who was a vizier under the previous king.



Another statue, shows Pepi II as a naked child.

A glimpse of the personality of the early child king can be found in a letter he wrote to Harkhuf, a governor of Aswan and the head of one of the expeditions he sent into Nubia. Sent to trade and collect ivory, ebony and other precious items, he captured a pygmy. News of this reached the royal court, and an excited young king sent word back to Harkhuf that he would be greatly rewarded if the pygmy were brought back alive, likely to serve as an entertainer for the court. This letter was preserved as a lengthy inscription on Harkhuf's tomb, and has been called the first travelogue.

Wives

Over his long life Pepi II had several wives, thought to include Neith (A), Iput II, Ankhenespepy III, Ankhenespepy IV, and Udjebten. Following a long tradition of royal incestuous marriage, Neith was Pepi II's half-sister (daughter of Ankhnemesmerire I) and Iput was his niece (a daughter of his brother Merenre). Of these queens, Neith, Iput, and Udjebten each had their own minor pyramids and mortuary templates as part of the king's own pyramid complex in Saqqara.

Foreign Relations

It is thought that Pepi II carried on in the tradition of his predecessors and continued with existing foreign relations, and possibly expanding further trade links into southern Africa. Copper and turquoise mining were undertaken at Wadi Maghara, and alabaster was quarried from Hatnub, both in the Sinai. There is at least one trade expedition to Punt recorded. Diplomatic records also exist of missions to Byblos in ancient Palestine.

Pepi II is thought to have taken a policy of pacification in Nubia, with Harkhuf making at least two further expeditions into the area. Over time it appears as though

relations grew strained, for while Harkhuf managed to return safely from each of his expeditions, one of his successors was not so lucky.

There were also military forays into adjacent lands, but it is noted that there was an increasing reliance upon Libyan and Nubian mercenaries. Further possible evidence of a relative lack of success in these ventures comes from the fact that a scene from the king's pyramid, depicting him as a Sphinx trampling his enemies - including a Libyan chieftain and his family - is wholly derivative from the mortuary complex of previous pharaoh Sahure, which calls into question the veracity of the events supposedly being depicted. It is also known that near the end of his reign, some foreign relations were completely broken off, a further sign of the disintegration of central rule.

The Decline of the Old Kingdom

The decline of the Old Kingdom arguably began before the time of Pepi II, with nomarchs (regional representatives of the king) becoming more and more powerful and exerting greater influence. Pepi I for example, married two sisters who were the daughters of a nomarch. That king later made their brother a vizier. Their influence was extensive, both sisters bearing sons who were chosen as part of the royal succession: Merenre and Pepi II.

Increasing wealth and power appears to have been handed over to high officials during Pepi II's reign. Large and expensive tombs appear at many of the major nomes of Egypt, building by the reigning nomarchs, the priestly class and other administrators. Nomarchs were traditionally free from taxation and their positions became hereditary. Their increasing wealth and independence led to a corresponding shift in power away from the central royal court to the regional nomarchs.

Later in his reign it is known that Pepi divided the role of vizier into two: one for Upper Egypt and one for Lower, a further decentralization of power away from the royal capital of Memphis. Further, the seat of vizier of Upper Egypt was moved several times. The southern vizier was stationed at Thebes.

It is also thought that Pepi II's extraordinarily long reign may have been a contributing factor to the general breakdown of centralized royal rule. While there are some doubts that he reigned as long as 94 years (some scholars such as Von Beckerath believe this to be a misreading of long-lost original texts by early historians such as Manetho, and ascribe him a seemingly more realistic figure of 64 years, which seems more feasible if he was succeeded by his son as Egyptian tradition states, rather than a grandson), most believe that his reign was unusually long.

This almost certainly produced a succession crisis and also led to a stagnation of the central administration. A better documented example of this type of problem can be found in the long reign of much later Nineteenth Dynasty pharaoh Ramesses II and his successors. It should be stressed that Pepi II's highest date is the "Year after the 31st Count, 1st Month of Shemu, day 20" from Hatnub graffito No.7, according to Spalinger.

This date would be equivalent to only Pepi II's Year 62 (on the biennial dating system) and conforms well with the suggestion of a 64 Year reign for him given the noticeable absence of known dates for Pepi II from his 33rd to 47th Count. (a previous suggestion that the Year of the 33rd Count occurs for Pepi II in a royal decree for the mortuary cult of Queen Udjebten was withdrawn by Hans Goedicke in 1988 in favour of a more probable reading of the Year of the 24th Count instead.)

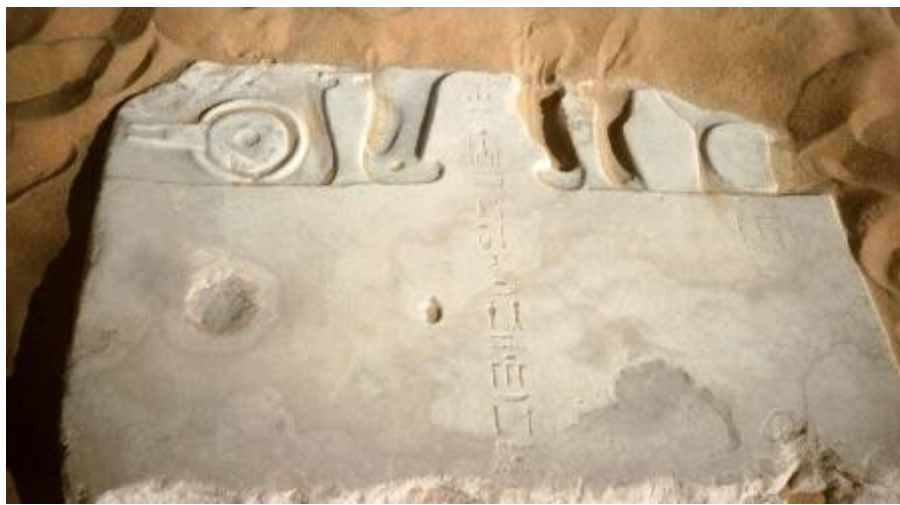


Scene From Pepi's Valley Temple





[Pepi II's Pyramid](#)



The South Saqqara Mound Mystery

Pepi II's pyramid complex (originally known as Pepi's Life is Enduring) is located in Saqqara, close to many other Old Kingdom pharaohs. His pyramid is a modest affair compared to the great pyramid builders of the Fourth Dynasty, but was comparable to earlier pharaohs from his own dynasty. It was originally 78.5 metres high, but erosion and relatively poor construction has reduced it 52 metres.

The pyramid was the center of a sizable funerary complex, complete with a separate mortuary complex, a small, eastern satellite pyramid. This was flanked by two of his wives' pyramids to the north and north-west (Neith (A) and Iput II respectively), and one to the south-east (Udjebten), each with their own mortuary complexes. Perhaps reflecting the decline at the end of his rule, the fourth wife, Ankhenespepy IV was not given her own pyramid but was instead buried in a store room of the Iput's mortuary chapel. Similarly, Prince Ptahshepses, who likely died near the end of Pepy II's reign, was buried in the funerary complex of a previous pharaoh, Unas, within a "recycled" sarcophagus dating to the Fourth Dynasty.

The ceiling of the burial chamber is decorated with stars, and the walls are lined with passages from the Pyramid texts. An empty black sarcophagus bearing the names and titles of Pepi II was discovered inside.

Following in the tradition of the final pharaoh of the Fifth Dynasty, Unas and of his more immediate predecessors Teti, Pepi I and Merenre, the interior of Pepi II's pyramid is decorated with what has become known as the pyramid texts, magical spells designed to protect the dead. Well over 800 individual texts (known as "utterances") are known to exist, and Pepi II's contains 675 such utterances, the most in any one place.

It is thought that this pyramid complex was completed no later than the thirtieth year of Pepi II's reign. No notable funerary constructions of note happened again for at least 30, and possibly as long as 60 years, due indirectly to the king's incredibly long reign. This meant there was a significant generational break for the trained stonecutters, masons, and engineers who had no major state project to work on and to pass along their practical skills. This may help explain why no major pyramid projects were undertaken by the subsequent regional kings of Herakleopolis during the First Intermediate Period.

The complex was first investigated by John Shae Perring, but it was Gaston Maspero who entered it first in 1881. Gustav Jequier investigated in detail between 1926 and 1932.

Successors

There are no official contemporary records or inscriptions of Pepi's immediate successors, and for this reason in many books Pepi II is typically credited as being the last verifiable pharaoh of the Sixth Dynasty and of the Old Kingdom.

However, according to the Manetho and the Turin King List, he was succeeded by his son Merenre II, who reigned for just over a year. He in turn may have been succeeded by Nitocris, who was likely Merenre II's sister as well as wife. If she did in fact rule, she would be the first female ruler of Egypt. According to the story as told by Manetho, Merenre II was assassinated, and Nitocris saw to it that his murderers were punished prior to committing suicide. There is now considerable doubt in the academic community as to whether she in fact existed, given the paucity of physical evidence in such things as the various Kings Lists attesting to her rule.

This was the end of the Old Kingdom of Egypt, a prelude to the roughly 200-year span of Egyptian history known as the First Intermediate Period.

Reference: Dodson, Aidan. Hilton, Dyan. 2004. *The Complete Royal Families of Ancient Egypt*

Merenre II (2184 BC)

Pepi II is followed in the king-lists by Merenre II, sometimes also called Nemtimsaf II. If the name of Nemtimsaf II was indeed Merenre, this would make him indistinguishable from Merenre I, so it is generally believed that the name Merenre has been given to Nemtimsaf II by mistake.

Merenre II is only known through king-lists, among which the Turin King-list, that credits him with a reign of slightly more than 1 year. He is assumed to have been a son of Pepi II. He was perhaps married to Nitocris, who may have been his sister.

Queen Nitocris



Nitocris has been claimed to have been the last pharaoh of the Sixth Dynasty. Her name is found in the Histories of Herodotus and writings of Manetho but her historicity is questionable.

According to Herodotus (Histories ii), she invited the murderers of her brother, the "king of Egypt", to a banquet, then killed them by flooding the sealed room with the Nile. Then, to avoid the other conspirators, she committed suicide (possibly by running into a burning room).

Manetho claims she built the "third pyramid" at Giza, which is attributed by modern historians and archaeologists to Menkaure. Herodotus also has a Babylonian queen of the same name and talks of her constructions in Babylon, mainly connected with diverting the Euphrates. His story about her tomb and the inscription on it which fooled Darius into opening it, only to have another inscription on the inside that chastised the opener for being so greedy is an early example of a familiar cultural meme.

Nitocris is not mentioned, however, in any native Egyptian inscriptions and "she" probably did not exist. It was long claimed that Nitocris appears on a fragment of the Turin King List, dated to the Nineteenth Dynasty, under the Egyptian name of Nitiqreti. The fragment where this name appears was thought to belong to the Sixth Dynasty portion of the king list, thus appearing to confirm both Herodotus and Manetho.

However, microscopic analysis of the Turin King List suggests the fragment was misplaced in reassembling the fragmentary text, and that the name Nitiqreti" is in fact a faulty transcription of the praenomen of a clearly male king Netjerkare Siptah I, who is named on the Abydos King List as the successor of the Sixth Dynasty king Nemtyemsaf II. On the Abydos King List, Netjerkare Siptah is placed in the equivalent spot that Neitiqreti Siptah holds on the Turin King List.

First Intermediate Period - c.2181 - 2040 BC

Dynasties 7-10

The First Intermediate Period is the name conventionally given by Egyptologists to that period in Ancient Egyptian history between the end of the Old Kingdom and the advent of the Middle Kingdom. As such, depending on when individual historians place the 'downfall' of the Old Kingdom - with the end of either the Sixth or the Eighth Dynasties - the First Intermediate Period (sometimes abbreviated as "FIP") can be considered to embrace the Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, Tenth, and most of the Eleventh Dynasties.

The Old Kingdom was weakened by famine and weak leadership. One theory holds that a sudden, unanticipated, catastrophic reduction in the Nile floods over two or three decades, caused by a global climatic cooling, reduced the amount of rainfall in Egypt, Ethiopia, and East Africa, contributing to the great famine and subsequent downfall of the Old Kingdom.

The last pharaoh of the Sixth Dynasty was Pepi II (or possibly Nitocris). He was 6 when he ascended the throne and believed to have been 100 years old when he died, for a reign of 94 years, longer than any monarch in history. The latter years of his reign were marked by inefficiency because of Pepi's advanced age. A dark time marked by unrest followed.

The Union of the Two Kingdoms fell apart and regional leaders had to cope with the famine. Around 2160 BC a new line of pharaohs (the Ninth and Tenth Dynasties) consolidated Lower Egypt from their capital in Herakleopolis Magna, descended from a pharaoh named Akhtoy.

In the meantime, however, a rival line (the Eleventh Dynasty) based at Thebes reunited Upper Egypt and a clash between the two rival dynasties was inevitable. Around 2055 BC a descendant of Inyotef defeated the Heracleopolitan Pharaohs, reunited the Two Lands, and ruled as Mentuhotep II thereby ending the First Intermediate Period.

There are various accounts of what happened in Egypt after Pepi II died. People sought stability, but things continued in turmoil. Pepi II's long reign had weakened central government, as the nomarchs (local governors) increasingly began to assert their independence from Pharaoh. Any nominal authority exerted by central government disappeared, as the nomarchs jostled for position, attempting to found their own dynasties.

There was a downside to the technological progress made during the Old Kingdom. Feats of engineering like the Sphinx and the pyramids at Giza had made the Egyptians complacent. This feeling of invincibility was exacerbated by the position of their country, hidden as it was in the fertile Nile Valley.

A word encapsulated how Egyptians felt about their civilization - 'Ma'at' meaning 'Stability' or 'Balance'.

Papyri dating from the Middle Kingdom show this breakdown very clearly. Due to the unstable nature of this period, no firm historical records survive from the First Intermediate Period.

There are some sources that mention a seventh dynasty which had 70 kings and which reigned for a total of 70 days. These are apocryphal, but nevertheless show how much the system had broken down.

We can place an eighth dynasty, which was possibly descended in some way from Pepi II and which ruled from Memphis, but we must assume that any influence they exerted was confined to the area immediately around Memphis, as the Nile Delta has been invaded by "asiatics" (the name given by Egyptians to people from what we now call the Middle East).

The kings of the eighth dynasty are somewhat ephemeral, but we know of 2 possible ones - Wajdkare and Qakare Iby.

After perhaps between 20 and 30 years, the eighth dynasty fell and the nomarchs once again jostled for supreme power. We now see the emergence of a ninth dynasty, ruling from Herakleopolis, perhaps founded by one Meryibre Khety.

Both this dynasty and its Herakleopolitain successor, the tenth dynasty, seem to have been highly unstable, with frequent changes of ruler.

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Running concurrent to the tenth dynasty, another dynasty was being established in Thebes (the eleventh dynasty). Founded by Intef I in c. 2134 BC, the first 3 kings of DXI (all called Intef and buried in an area called Dra Abu el-Naga, near to what would later become the Valley of the Kings) fought an ongoing conflict with the Herakleopolitain DX monarchs, with frequent clashes in the area around Abydos, where their two spheres of influence met.

Manetho's Seventh and Eighth Dynasties: A Puzzle Solved

- Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities

The only direct evidence for the existence of a Seventh and Eighth Dynasty in Egyptian history appears in two inconsistent, badly garbled, and heavily redacted copies of Manetho's history of Egypt. One copy was prepared by Africanus in the third century and the other by Eusebius in the fourth century. According to Africanus, the Seventh Dynasty consisted of seventy kings of Memphis, who reigned for 70 days" and the Eighth Dynasty consisted of „twenty-seven kings of Memphis, who reigned for 146 years.

Eusebius has a slightly different account. He has a Seventh Dynasty that consisted of five kings of Memphis, who reigned for 75 days and an Eighth Dynasty that consisted of five kings of Memphis, who reigned for 100 years.

These descriptions present Egyptologists with some problems. Not only does the description of the Seventh Dynasty appear to be either spurious or badly garbled, but no archaeologists would allow much more than a quarter of a century for both dynasties combined.

Adding to the difficulty is that there are three additional Egyptian king-lists that encompass this period, and while all have a different number of Memphite kings beginning with the Sixth Dynasty, none of them indicates any sort of dynastic break for a Seventh and/or Eighth Dynasty.

These two dynasties fall into Egypt's First Intermediate Period, and because of the great chaos in this time and the scarcity of records, Egyptologists generally assume that the differences among the two Manetho copies and the various king-lists simply reflect the confusion among the various scribes who attempted to recreate the political records of this earlier era.

The original authors of the king-lists, had a clear picture of the First Intermediate Period and that the differences among the king-lists reflect not confusion but political/theological alternatives. More specifically, the political/theological problem involved the determination of when Horus stopped ruling in Memphis and started ruling in Thebes.

Different cult centers, as reflected in the king-lists, had different answers. In addition, I am going to argue that the original Manetho king-list never had a Seventh and Eighth Dynasty and that what appears in the Africanus and Eusebius copies are garbled transmissions of lines of summation.

Dynasty 7 was originally a line of summation for the entire Memphite line of kings, beginning with the First Dynasty and ending with the Sixth Dynasty; Dynasty 8 was a line of summation for just the Sixth Dynasty.

There were three major political events that took place during First Intermediate Period.

One was the termination of the Memphite line of kings sometime after the start of the Sixth Dynasty.

Two was the foundation of a line of kings in Herakleopolis, which line belongs to Dyns. 9 and 10. Three was the foundation of the Eleventh Dynasty in Thebes.

There was some overlap between the last Memphite kings and the earliest Herakleopolitan kings, but where in the Memphite sequence this overlap began is not known.

There was also some overlap between the Herakleopolitans and the Eleventh Dynasty Thebans, which period lasted about 100 years, ending when Menthotpe II defeated his Herakleopolitan rival.

Whether or not there was some overlap between the kings of Memphis and the kings of Thebes is unknown.

Each of the various king-lists for this time period provides a different roster of kings and dynasties. The three earliest are the Table of Sakkara, the Table of Abydos, and the Turin Canon of Kings.

All three date to the Nineteenth Dynasty. The other relevant king-list is Manetho's, which dates to the third century B.C., about one thousand years later than the others. But his original manuscript is lost, and for the First Intermediate Period we have to rely on the badly garbled copies of Africanus and Eusebius.

The most abbreviated account of the First Intermediate Period comes from the Table of Sakkara. It ends the Sixth Dynasty after the fourth king, Phiops, and then immediately jumps to the reign of Menthotpe II, the Theban pharaoh who defeated Herakleopolis and united Egypt.

This list, therefore, omits part of the Sixth Dynasty, all of the Seventh, Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth Dynasties, and part of the Eleventh Dynasty. The period omitted comes closest to what we currently describe as the First Intermediate Period. That the Sakkara list ends the Sixth Dynasty with the reign of Phiops, who apparently ruled in excess of ninety years, provides a good clue that whatever went wrong politically began either during or immediately after the reign of this king.

The Table of Abydos presents a different perspective. Beginning with the first king of the Sixth Dynasty, it lists 22 Memphite kings, and there is no indication of any dynastic breaks anywhere in this list. The Abydos list, like the Sakkara list, omits any mention of the Herakleopolitans, and also skips the first few Theban kings, jumping directly to the reign of Menthotpe II.

The Turin Canon shows a Sixth Dynasty consisting of twelve Memphite kings, and, although the lengths of reign are badly damaged, a summation line indicates that the total duration was either 181 or 187 years.

There is no indication therein of a Seventh or Eighth Dynasty from Memphis. (Following the Sixth Dynasty Memphite kings, the Turin Canon allows for eighteen Herakleopolitan kings, but does not divide them into two separate dynasties as Manetho does.

Many Egyptologists believe that at least one of the two Herakleopolitan dynasties, Nine or Ten, is spurious. After the Herakleopolitans, the Turin Canon lists several Eleventh Dynasty Theban kings prior to Menthotpe II.

While most Egyptologists tend to dismiss these differences as reflecting the chaotic nature of the First Intermediate Period, I suggest that a more logical interpretation is

that these three king-lists each present a different political viewpoint about the legitimacy of various kings.

The Egyptians were a very conservative people and did not approve of abrupt changes in the political order. The king was thought of as a human aspect of the god Horus, and a challenge to the legitimate king was the equivalent of a challenge to the god Horus. During the First Intermediate Period, however, there were three rival kingdoms, Memphis, Thebes, and Herakleopolis.

Only one could be the legitimate center of power. Horus could only rule from one throne.

The central theological problem of the First Intermediate Period, then, was "When did Horus stop ruling in Memphis and when did he begin to rule from another city?"

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The Sakkara list represents a 'plague on all your houses' point of view. Implying that the outbreak of troubles began either during or immediately after the reign of Phiope, the fourth king of the Sixth Dynasty, the Sakkara scribe refuses to recognize any legitimate authority until Menthotpe II reunites Egypt. The list omits the entire period in which there were competing claims.

The Abydos list presents a very different perspective, that of the Memphite loyalist. What we see reflected here is a hard core support for the Memphite throne, complete rejection of the Herakleopolitan claims, and some distaste for the Theban upstarts.

It is only after the Memphite throne has ceased to exist and Menthotpe II has reunited Egypt that the Abydos scribe confers legitimacy on the Theban monarchy. If any Theban kings ruled between the time that the Memphite line ended and Menthotpe II reunited Egypt, the Abydos scribe refuses to recognize their legitimacy.

A still different set of values is reflected in the Turin Canon of Kings. The Turin Canon is a Theban document, written by a Theban scribe during a Theban administration. It presents a Theban political viewpoint.

Because it is Theban, it begins the Eleventh Dynasty with the founders of the Theban line rather than with the later reign of Menthotpe II. But the Thebans can not allow a document to show Memphite kings on the throne at the same time as Theban kings. This would be sacrilege, an affront to Horus in Memphis.

This raises the question of whether the Memphite line ended before Thebes came to the throne or after. The Turin Canon, however, only has twelve kings listed where the Abydos list has twenty-two. Since Thebes had an interest in showing a smooth transition from Memphis to Thebes, with no gaps, I suggest that the Turin Canon's Sixth Dynasty ended at exactly the point where it began the Eleventh Dynasty and that the Thebans deliberately omitted the last ten Memphite kings in order to avoid any appearance of conflict.

On the other hand, the Turin Canon does show a line of Herakleopolitan kings. This is politically significant. Theban authority stems from its defeat of the Herakleopolitan kings. Therefore the Herakleopolitan kings need to be mentioned. But the inclusion of the Herakleopolitan kings also serves to remind Egyptians that the Memphites couldn't defeat the Herakleopolitans, and that Horus must have abandoned Memphis in favor of those kings who did defeat the Herakleopolitans.

Before turning to Manetho's Seventh and Eighth Dynasties, one more observation about the king-lists is in order. Manetho and the Table of Sakkara both make Phriops the fourth king of the Sixth Dynasty.

The Turin Canon and the Table of Abydos make him the fifth king. The latter two lists place an additional king between Manetho's first and second king. This king appears to be named Usarkare and he is documented in the archaeological record, but his reign seems to have been relatively brief.

This suggests that Manetho and the Table of Sakkara both omitted Usarkare from the sequence of Memphite kings. Therefore, if Manetho originally had intended to include a complete list of Memphite kings in his chronology, he would have had only 21 kings, instead of the 22 in the Table of Abydos. This figure of '21' is significant in our reconstruction of Manetho.

[Article with Table - Continued](#)

OTHER WRITINGS BY GARY GREENBERG

Manetho's Seventh and Eighth Dynasties: A Puzzle Solved **From the *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities*, # 25**

The only direct evidence for the existence of a Seventh and Eighth Dynasty in Egyptian history appears in two inconsistent, badly garbled, and heavily redacted copies of Manetho's history of Egypt. One copy was prepared by Africanus in the third century and the other by Eusebius in the fourth century. According to Africanus, the Seventh Dynasty consisted of "seventy kings of Memphis, who reigned for 70 days" (1) and the Eighth Dynasty consisted of "twenty-seven kings of Memphis, who reigned for 146 years." (2) Eusebius has a slightly different account. He has a Seventh Dynasty that consisted of "five kings of Memphis, who reigned for 75 days" (3) and an Eighth Dynasty that consisted of "five kings of Memphis, who reigned for 100 years." (4) These descriptions present Egyptologists with some problems. Not only does the description of the Seventh Dynasty appear to be either spurious or badly garbled, but no archaeologists would allow much more than a quarter of a century for both dynasties combined. Adding to the difficulty is that there are three additional Egyptian king-lists that encompass this period, and while all have a different number of Memphite kings beginning with the Sixth Dynasty, none of them indicates any sort of dynastic break for a Seventh and/or Eighth Dynasty.

These two dynasties fall into Egypt's First Intermediate Period, and because of the great chaos in this time and the scarcity of records, Egyptologists generally assume

that the differences among the two Manetho copies and the various king-lists simply reflect the confusion among the various scribes who attempted to recreate the political records of this earlier era. In this paper, I am going to argue for a different interpretation of the evidence. The original authors of the king-lists, I maintain, had a very clear picture of the First Intermediate Period and that the differences among the king-lists reflect not confusion but political/theological alternatives. More specifically, the political/theological problem involved the determination of when Horus stopped ruling in Memphis and started ruling in Thebes. Different cult centers, as reflected in the king-lists, had different answers. In addition, I am going to argue that the original Manetho king-list never had a Seventh and Eighth Dynasty and that what appears in the Africanus and Eusebius copies are garbled transmissions of lines of summation. Dyn. 7 was originally a line of summation for the entire Memphite line of kings, beginning with the First Dynasty and ending with the Sixth Dynasty; Dyn. 8 was a line of summation for just the Sixth Dynasty.

Before making the case, let me place the First Intermediate Period into political context. There were three major political events that took place during this time frame. One was the termination of the Memphite line of kings sometime after the start of the Sixth Dynasty. Two was the foundation of a line of kings in Herakleopolis, which line belongs to Dyns. 9 and 10. Three was the foundation of the Eleventh Dynasty in Thebes. There was some overlap between the last Memphite kings and the earliest Herakleopolitan kings, but where in the Memphite sequence this overlap began is not known. There was also some overlap between the Herakleopolitans and the Eleventh Dynasty Thebans, which period lasted about 100 years, ending when Menthotpe II defeated his Herakleopolitan rival. Whether or not there was some overlap between the kings of Memphis and the kings of Thebes is unknown.

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any mention of the Herakleopolitans, and also skips the first few Theban kings, jumping directly to the reign of Menthotpe II. (7)

The Turin Canon shows a Sixth Dynasty consisting of twelve Memphite kings, and, although the lengths of reign are badly damaged, a summation line indicates that the total duration was either 181 (8) or 187 (9) years. There is no indication therein of a Seventh or Eighth Dynasty from Memphis. (10) Following the Sixth Dynasty Memphite kings, the Turin Canon allows for eighteen Herakleopolitan kings, but does not divide them into two separate dynasties as Manetho does. Many Egyptologists believe that at least one of the two Herakleopolitan dynasties, Nine or Ten, is spurious. After the Herakleopolitans, the Turin Canon lists several Eleventh Dynasty Theban kings prior to Menthotpe II. (11)

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Before turning to Manetho's Seventh and Eighth Dynasties, one more observation about the king-lists is in order. Manetho and the Table of Sakkara both make Phiops the fourth king of the Sixth Dynasty. The Turin Canon and the Table of Abydos make him the fifth king. The latter two lists place an additional king between Manetho's first and second king. This king appears to be named Usarkare and he is documented in the archaeological record, but his reign seems to have been relatively brief. This suggests that Manetho and the Table of Sakkara both omitted Usarkare from the sequence of Memphite kings. Therefore, if Manetho originally had intended to include a complete list of Memphite kings in his chronology, he would have had only 21 kings, instead of the 22 in the Table of Abydos. This figure of "21" is significant in our reconstruction of Manetho.

Table 1 presents an outline of the first eight dynasties as recorded in both versions of Manetho. For each dynasty it shows how many kings were claimed and how many kings were listed by name. Look first at the Africanus list. There is only one important anomaly. For the Fifth Dynasty, Africanus has a summation line claiming eight kings, but nine kings are listed.(12) If we count up the number of kings listed for the first five dynasties, the total is 43. If we add to that number the 27 kings in Dyn. 8, we have seventy kings, the number claimed for Dyn. 7. This strongly suggests that Dyn. 7 was originally a line of summation, but of what?

Table 1

Outline of Manetho's First Eight Dynasties

Dynasty	Africanus		Eusebius	
	Kings Claimed	Kings Listed	Kings Claimed	Kings Listed
1	8	8	8	8
2	9	9	9	9 (3 missing)
3	9	9	8	8 (6 missing)
4	8	8	17	1

5	8	9	31	2 (from Dyn. 6)
6	6	6	?	1
7	70	0	5	0
8	27	0	5	0
Sum 1-5	42	43	73	?

The clue is in the 27 kings of Dyn. 8. The number 27 is the sum of 21 + 6. “21” is the number of kings in the entire Memphite line, and “6” is the number of kings in Manetho’s Sixth Dynasty. This suggests that Manetho’s Eighth Dynasty was originally a garbled transmission of a Sixth Dynasty line of summation. What seems to have happened is that after the list of Manetho’s first six Memphite kings, there must have been a line of summation that indicated that the last 21 Memphite kings belonged to the last Memphite dynasty. One of Manetho’s earlier redactors must have misread the text and thought the 21 kings were in addition to the six listed kings, getting a total of 27 kings in all. He may have then written that the last Memphite dynasty had 27 kings. This line of summation was later misread as a separate dynasty apart from the six listed Memphite kings. Because of its description as the last Memphite dynasty, it was placed at the end of the Memphite list and became identified as the Eighth Dynasty.

This confusion about 27 kings being the “last Memphite dynasty” led to an additional error. After the original Sixth Dynasty listing must have been a line of summation for all six dynasties combined, which may have read something like, “number of kings for first five dynasties plus last dynasty, X days” where “X” would originally have been the total number of kings for the first six dynasties and “days” would have been a metaphor for “a complete reign”, the metaphor being based on the daily circuit of the sun. In effect, the text would have said there were “X number of complete reigns,” but it would not have recorded in that location the total number of years actually ruled. Manetho’s intent was to add the 21 kings of Dyn. 6 to the earlier kings in Dyns. 1-5. The “X” entry, however, may have been damaged in transmission, and one of the early redactors must have thought the “last dynasty” referred to the erroneously described “Eighth Dynasty of 27 kings” and added that on to the total for the first five dynasties, getting 70 in all. This line of summation was then subsequently misread as a separate Seventh Dynasty.

If Africanus’s Eighth Dynasty was originally a garbled line of summation for the Sixth Dynasty, where, then, did he get the figure of 146 years for the Eighth Dynasty’s duration? The most likely explanation is that it is connected to the confusion over the existence of the “last Memphite dynasty.” Since the problems between Herakleopolis and Memphis appear to have broken out during the reign of Phiops, Manetho probably had a line of summation for the number of years in which Memphis and Herakleopolis were in conflict, said period of time beginning with the reign of Phiops and continuing to the end of the Sixth Dynasty. His text probably indicated something like “the last group of Memphite kings ruled for 146 years,” which period began with the reign of Phiops. One of the redactors, however, appears to have confused this reference to a “last group of kings” with the erroneously created

“last Memphite dynasty of 27 kings” and attached the 146 year figure to the misnamed Eighth Dynasty.

In support of this idea, let's look at the relevant chronology. According to Africanus, from Phiops to the end of his Sixth Dynasty, there is a total of 108 years. (13) The Turin Canon has an additional five kings, the last four of whom ruled just under ten years. (14) The reign for the fifth one is damaged but no one believes it was any longer than a year or two. This brings us to a total of about 118 to 119 years. This leaves about 27 to 28 years for the nine additional Memphite kings in the Abydos list that follow after the Turin Canon's last Memphite king, which coincides quite well with the traditional view that these nine kings couldn't have ruled for more than about a quarter of a century.

An examination of the Eusebius list lends some support to our hypothesis about the Africanus list. Unfortunately, the Eusebius list is not only corrupt, but it is quite obvious that dynasties were concatenated together. His Fourth Dynasty of 17 kings, for instance, certainly is out of proportion, and appears to be the sum of $8 + 9$, the numeric sequence of kings in Africanus's Fourth and Fifth Dynasty combined. That Eusebius (or more likely his source) mistakenly combined Dyns. 4 and 5, is evident from Eusebius's descriptions of the Fifth Dynasty. He claims that there were 31 kings, but he names the first and fourth kings in the list and they are from the Sixth Dynasty. His list has obviously attached the Fifth Dynasty kings to the Fourth Dynasty roster and thereby shifted the Sixth Dynasty kings into the Fifth Dynasty position. His figure of 31 kings is also suspicious. Not only is it too large, it is the sum of $21 + 5 + 5$. This suggests that it is a concatenation of the 21 kings of the Sixth Dynasty Memphite line with the 5 kings in his Seventh Dynasty and the 5 kings in his Eighth Dynasty, an error consistent with his previously described errors.

Look now at the sum of kings in Eusebius's first five dynasties. It is 73. But his Third Dynasty has only 8 kings where Africanus has 9 kings. If we make that upward adjustment, the new total is 74. Additionally, Eusebius's Sixth Dynasty contains only one king. Adding on the single Sixth Dynasty king to the previous total for the first five dynasties gives a sum of 75.

This brings us back to our earlier suggestion that the use of the term “days” in the Seventh Dynasty, was a metaphor for “complete reigns.” Africanus's Seventh Dynasty has 70 kings ruling for 70 days. Eusebius has 5 kings ruling for 75 days. Note that the Africanus sum for Dynasties 1-5 and 8 equals “70” and the Eusebius reigns for Dyn. 1-6 add up to 75, each corresponding to the number of days ruled in the Seventh Dynasty. Since Africanus's Eighth Dynasty appears to be a summation line for the Sixth Dynasty, both the Africanus and Eusebius lists appear to have confused a line of summation for the first six dynasties with a description of a Seventh Dynasty. In sum, then, Manetho's Seventh Dynasty was nothing more than a summation line for the first six dynasties, and Manetho's Eighth Dynasty was nothing more than a garbled summation line for the Sixth Dynasty, in which the first six kings were accidentally double counted.

One last note on Eusebius: He gives the Eighth Dynasty a duration of 100 years where Africanus had 146 years. It was suggested earlier that the Africanus figure represented the sum of Memphite years beginning with Phiops. We note, however, that in the

Africanus list, Africanus's source mistakenly confused Phiops's 100th birthday with his 100th year on the throne. (15) The Eusebius figure, therefore, may represent the erroneous total for Phiops's reign, with the balance of the reigns omitted.

In summation, we can say the following: Ancient Egyptian records clearly preserved a list of 22 Memphite kings beginning with the Sixth Dynasty. Some king-lists, however, such as Manetho's and the Table of Sakkara, omitted the second king on this list, who apparently had a very brief reign. Because of different political views about when moral authority departed from Memphis and alighted in Thebes, different king-lists had different listings of which kings they thought had moral authority. Some, as in Sakkara, thought that from Phiops to Menthopte II all were illegitimate. Others, as in Abydos, were Memphite loyalists and rejected Theban claims until the reunification. And the Thebans claimed the earliest possible moment for their legitimacy, showing no break between the Memphite Sixth Dynasty and the Theban Eleventh Dynasty. Manetho, attempting a complete history, tried to list everybody. He listed the first six kings in the Sixth Dynasty and indicated that there were 21 kings in the "last Memphite Dynasty." This ambiguous description of a "last Memphite dynasty" led to a series of errors by Manetho's redactors. The end result was to create a Seventh Dynasty out of a line of summation for the first six dynasties and to create an Eighth Dynasty out of a line of summation for the Sixth Dynasty.

Since the misinterpretation of Manetho is the sole evidence for the existence of a Seventh and Eighth Dynasty, those two dynasties should disappear from the Egyptian history. Furthermore, the First Intermediate Period should probably now be defined more precisely in accordance with the description in the Table of Sakkara, beginning during the reign of Phiops and ending with Menthopte II's conquest over Herakleopolis. More specifically, the First Intermediate Period should be defined simply as the period in time when Herakleopolitan kings ruled independently of Memphis and Thebes.

Endnotes

1. Manetho, 57.
2. Manetho, 59.
3. Manetho, 57.
4. Manetho, 59.
5. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 436-8.
6. Gardiner, 102, 436-8.
7. Gardiner, 436-8.
8. Gardiner, 102, 436.
9. Hayes, *Cambridge Ancient History*, I:1:179.
10. Gardiner, 101-2.
11. Gardiner, 438.
12. Manetho, 51.
13. Manetho, 55.
14. Gardiner, 436.
15. Manetho, 53-5.

The way I see it, it's all based on mathematics. The names and exact dates are not as important as the metaphors and the geometry.

SEVENTH AND EIGHTH DYNASTIES

2152 - 2130

Netrikare
Menkare
Neferkare II
Neferkare III
Djedkare II
Neferkare IV
Merenhor
Menkamin I
Nikare
Neferkare V
Neferkahor
Neferkare VI
Neferkamin II
Ibi I
Neferkaure
Neferkauhor
Neferirkare II

Attested Kings about whom nothing more is known:

Wadjkare - "Prosperous is the Soul of Re"
Sekhemkare
Iti
Imhotep
Isu
Iytenu

NINTH AND TENTH DYNASTIES - 2135 - 2074 BC

Neferkare
Mery-ib-re Khety - dates uncertain - "Beloved is the Heart of Re"
Mery-ka-re - dates uncertain - "Beloved is the Soul of Re"
Ka-nefer-re - dates uncertain - "Beautiful is the Soul of Re"
Neb-kau-re Akh-toy - dates uncertain - "Golden are the Souls of Re"

This dynasty was also known as the Herakleopolis Dynasty because the rulers controlled lower Egypt from Herakleopolis. This dynasty is also often called the "House of Khety" because many of the ruler's names were Khety, but it is considered to be fairly unstable due to frequent changes in rulers. The Herakleopolitans expelled Asiatic immigrants from the Nile delta and fortified the eastern border of Egypt. This dynasty was responsible for establishing the importance of Memphis.

The Herakleopolitans improved irrigation works, reopened trade with Byblos, and began the "Coffin Texts". One of the kings wrote the "Instruction to Merikara." They also had frequent outbreaks of fighting against the Thebans north of Abydos. Eventually they were conquered by the Thebans and this marked the end of the Herakleopolis Dynasty and the beginning of the Middle Kingdom.

The only person from this era to have left an impression on posterity is a woman called Nitokris who appears to have acted as king. There are no contemporary records but Herodotus wrote of her:

She killed hundreds of Egyptians to avenge the king, her brother, whom his subjects had killed, and had forced her to succeed. She did this by constructing a huge underground chamber. Then invited to a banquet all those she knew to be responsible for her brother's death. When the banquet was underway, she let the river in on them, through a concealed pipe. After this fearful revenge, she flung herself into a room filled with embers, to escape her punishment."

For a time petty warlords ruled the provinces. Then from the city of Herakleopolis there emerged a ruling family led by one Khety who for a time held sway over the whole country. However, this was short lived and the country split into two, the north ruled from Herakleopolis and the south ruled from Thebes.

Whereas the Theban dynasty was stable, kings succeeded one another rapidly at Herakleopolis. There was continual conflict between the two lands which was resolved in the 11th dynasty.

King Ouakha-Re KHETY III (2110to 2075 BC) taught his son, the future king MERIKARE of the 10th dynasty (2075 to 2060BC), thus : (Papyrus of the Hermitage Museum - N0. 1115 at Copenhagen.)

"Life on earth passes quickly, and happy are those without sin, because a million men will serve as nothing to the king of heaven and earth when they appear as sinners in the next life. The memory of the good man will live for ever. The essence of life is in the word of the ancestors; it is contained in books. Open and read them.

Practice justice as long as you are on earth, Comfort those that cry, do not oppress the widow and the orphan. (sentences that the Bible repeats often.)

God knows the treacherous and paid for their sins in His blood... Go down the difficult path, because the soul of the man is drawn to the place that it knows, does not depart from the way of truth; and no-one can prevent it!

Know that the judges in the courthouse of the next world will examine a life as if it were only an hour. Happy is the one that reaches the next life : he will be like a god, he will move freely like the masters of eternity, because there is no-one who can oppose the CREATOR, who is omnipresent and omniscient. Honor your invisible God on your way, practice truth and justice,

Act for God so that he can do the same for you. After having punished men (in the deluge?), his light (Re) again shines in the sky, so that men may see it.

These sublime words were written toward 2080BC, within one or two hundred years of the birth in UR in the Chaldees of a young man called Abraham."

11th Dynasty (Thebes Only)

Mentuhotep I (2125 BC ?)

Mentuhotep I was a local Egyptian ruler at Thebes during the First Intermediate Period. He founded the Eleventh dynasty which eventually reunited Egypt under the Middle Kingdom. He is associated with Mentuhotep II. It is commonly thought that the two rulers were one and the same.

Antef I - Inyotef I - Intef I - 2134-2118 BC

Antef I was the son of a local ruler of Thebes named Mentuhotep I. He was the first Theban ruler to have proclaimed himself king, assuming a Horus-name and writing his personal name in a cartouche. He thus opposed the kings of the 9/10th Dynasty of Heracleopolis and started a civil war.

That a local ruler of a relatively small city was able to oppose the ruling dynasty can be explained by the strong decentralisation of the Ancient Egyptian government, which, in turn, may have been the result of the low inundation of the Nile at the end of the Old Kingdom. He conquered some of the cities to the north of Thebes, among them Koptos and Dendara. To the south, he extended his reign to Elkab.

He was buried in a long, narrow rock-tomb on the West-bank of Thebes.

Antef II - Inyotef II - Intef II - 2118-2069 BC

During the reign of Antef II, which, according to the Turin King-list lasted for as long as 49 years, the kings of the 9/10th Dynasty tried to re-conquer the territory they had previously lost to Antef I, in an attempt to establish their rule over the whole of Egypt.

Antef II, however, succeeded not only in warding off the Heracleopolitan attacks, but also in conquering even more of their territory: Abydos, Akhmim and Kaw el-Kabir. In the south, he extended the Theban rule to the First Cataract, the traditional southern border of Ancient Egypt.

Antef II was buried in a rock-tomb next to his predecessor's. This tomb is known from the representation of the king's dogs, which had foreign names. The tomb is also mentioned in the texts from the end of the New Kingdom about the tomb robberies of that era.

Antef III - Inyotef III - Intef III - 2069 - 2061 BC

Little is known about the reign of Antef III. The Turin King-list credits him with a reign of at least 8 years. He was the father of Mentuhotep II, who would re-unite Egypt under one rule. It does not appear that this king gained or lost territory to the kings of the 9/10th Dynasty.

He was buried in a narrow rock-tomb next to Antef II.

MIDDLE KINGDOM BEGINS - ALL OF EGYPT

The Middle Kingdom is a period in the history of ancient Egypt stretching from the establishment of the Eleventh Dynasty to the end of the Fourteenth Dynasty, roughly between 1991 BC and 1648 BC.

The Middle Kingdom has been usually dated to the time when Pharaoh Mentuhotep II from Thebes defeated the last king of the Tenth Dynasty around the 14th Year of his reign to reunite Egypt thus bringing an end to the First Intermediate Period. Some authorities point to cultural differences between the Eleventh and Twelfth Dynasties, and date the Middle Kingdom to the beginning of that dynasty.

Mentuhotep II (c. 2060 - 2010 BC)



He was the first ruler of the Middle Kingdom.

His throne name was Neb-hetep-re, meaning "Pleased is the Lord Re".

Mentuhotep II was the son of the Theban ruler Antef III and a woman named Iah. When he came to power, his predecessors had already conquered a territory that stretched far beyond Thebes, from the 1st cataract in the south, to the region of Qaw el-Kabir in the north.

The Turin King-lists credits this king with a reign of as much as 51 years. In light of the many events that occurred during his reign, this is not unlikely.

Mentuhotep II was responsible for the reunification of Egypt.

His achievements can be reviewed by looking at how his Horus name changed during his rule. He started off calling himself "He who gives heart to the Two Lands", and then moved on to "Lord of the White Crown" (the White Crown being symbolic of Upper Egypt). Finally, he became known as "Uniter of the Two Lands".

The first years of his reign have left us with only few testimonies. This could mean that he reached the throne at a young age, something that is also suggested by the long duration of his reign. His 14th regnal year was apparently a turning-point in the life of Mentuhotep. Its name "year of the crime of Thinis" suggests that there was some trouble in the Thinite province, where the age-old holy city of Abydos was located. Apparently the Heracleopolitan king Kheti of the 9/10th Dynasty had succeeded in re-conquering this province and was threatening to do the same with the rest of Upper-Egypt. During this re-conquest, a large part of the old necropolis of Abydos was destroyed.

Mentuhotep immediately reacted and not only repelled the Heracleopolitans from Abydos, he also continued the war against them, conquering Assiut, Middle-Egypt and finally Heracleopolis itself. With the fall of the Heracleopolitan Dynasty, nothing stood in the way for the final re-unification of Egypt under Theban rule.

At the latest by his 39th year, but presumably somewhere around his 30th year, Egypt was united again and Mentuhotep II was the first Theban who could rightfully call himself King of Upper- and Lower-Egypt thus ushering in the Middle Kingdom.

Mentuhotep's military efforts were not only aimed at reuniting the Two Lands. Inscriptions in Nubia show his desire to re-establish the Egyptian supremacy over this region. A mass-tomb found in Deir el-Bahari contained 60 bodies of slain Egyptian soldiers who perhaps lost their lives in Nubia. That these soldiers were given a burial so near the king's own funerary monument, demonstrates how much importance was attached to them.

Even during the re-conquest of Egypt, Mentuhotep built or restored several temples throughout his territory. He was particularly active in Upper-Egypt as is shown by monuments in Dendara, Abydos, Elkab and Elephantine. The warrior-king paid special homage to the war-god Montu, who, at that time, was the principal god of the Theban province. For him he built temples in Medamud, Armant and Tod.



A view on the remains of Mentuhotep's funerary temple (foreground). The larger building in the background is Hatshepsut's temple, the design of which was largely based on Mentuhotep's.

The most famous monument built by Mentuhotep II was his funerary monument. Unlike his predecessors, who were buried in relatively simple tombs in Dra Abu el-Naga', Mentuhotep chose to build his mortuary temple and tomb at Deir el-Bahari. The design of this building was unique: a terrace was built against the cliffs of Deir el-Bahari. Upon the roof of that terrace was built a massive stone construction, identified by some archaeologists as a pyramid, by others as a mastaba. The tomb of the king was located in the rock behind and underneath the temple.

Mentuhotep III (c. 2010-1998 BC)

Mentuhotep III was the son and successor of Mentuhotep II. He is attested as "eldest son of the king" in his father's mortuary temple in Deir el-Bahari.

Because of his father's long reign, he may already have been relatively old by the time he reached the throne. The Turin King-list has recorded 12 years for this king.

After the military reign of his father, Mentuhotep III's reign was peaceful. The king's main concern was no longer the conquest of new territory, but the protection of Egypt against foreign states and roaming Bedouin. The cult for this Mentuhotep in the eastern Delta is probably related to his policy to fortify the north-eastern border against the Asian nomads.

The most important event during this king's reign was an expedition, led by a man named Henenu, through the Wadi Hammamat to the Red Sea and from there to the legendary land of Punt, from where many exotic products and incense were brought to Egypt.

Despite its relatively short duration, this reign has produced several temples throughout Upper-Egypt, from the southern most border in Elephantine, over Elkab, Tod and Armant to Abydos, as evidenced by a relief found in Armant.

A tomb was apparently started for this king, near Deir el-Bahari, but it was left unfinished.

Mentuhotep IV (c.1998 - 1991 BC)

Mentuhotep IV was the last king of the 11th Dynasty. He was the son of a woman named Imi, who was a secondary wife of either Mentuhotep II or Mentuhotep III.

This Mentuhotep is missing in most king-lists. The Turin-king-list merely notes 7 missing years at the end of this dynasty, just after the reign of Mentuhotep III. This probably refers to a gap in the documentation of about 7 years, which may have been filled by Nebtawire's reign. An offering table found in Karnak mentions the "Father of the God" Sesostri, the father of Amenemhat I, the founder of the next dynasty, in his place.

Either Mentuhotep IV was considered as an usurper, or the kings of the 12th Dynasty decided to re-write history to justify their claims to the throne. That he was not recognised as the legitimate king of the country may perhaps be supported by the many opponents to his reign: Antef, who may have been a member of the royal family, Iy-ib-khent-re and Segerseni all assumed royal titulary, thereby stating that they had more rights to the throne.

During the second year of his reign, he organised an expedition to the quarries of the Wadi Hammamat, located to the north-east of Thebes, between Koptos and the Red Sea. The 19 inscriptions left behind there by the members of the expedition are the only testimony to this Mentuhotep's reign.

The expedition was led by a vizier named Amenemhat, who is assumed by most Egyptologists to have been the later king Amenemhat I. A stone plate found at Lisht, bearing both the names of Mentuhotep IV and of king Amenemhat I may perhaps indicate that Amenemhat I was a co-regent during the later years of Mentuhotep's reign. This in turn could perhaps indicate that Mentuhotep IV had intended Amenemhat to be his successor.

TWELFTH DYNASTY - (1937-1759 BC)

According to Manetho, the 12th Dynasty comprised seven kings from Thebes, who ruled for a total of 160 years in the version of Africanus, and for 245 years in the version of Eusebius. Oddly enough, this does not include the founder of the dynasty, Amenemhat I, who is added in succession to the kings of the 11th Dynasty.

In the Turin King-list, the dynasty started with Amenemhat I and consisted of 8 kings who ruled for a total of 213 years, 1 month and 17 days. All kings listed in the Turin King-list are also attested by contemporary sources and monuments.

The circumstances into which the 12th Dynasty came to power are not known. What is known is that Amenemhat I was not related to his predecessors. His father was a priest in Thebes named Senuseret. His mother was named Nefret and, according to the Prophecy of Neferti, came from Elephantine in the South of Egypt.

It is possible that Amenemhat was the vizier of Mentuhotep IV, the last king of the 11th Dynasty. A stone plate found at Lisht, bearing both the names of Mentuhotep IV and of king Amenemhat I may perhaps indicate that Amenemhat I was a co-regent during the later years of Mentuhotep's reign. This could perhaps indicate that Mentuhotep IV had intended Amenemhat to be his successor.

With the 12th Dynasty, a local god of obscure origin, Amun, would become the most important god of the Ancient Egyptian pantheon. The popularity of Amun is closely linked to the origin of Amenemhat I, whose name, containing the element Amun, shows a particular allegiance to this god. Even when Amenemhat moved the political center of the country from Thebes to the newly built capital Itj-tawi in the Fayum oasis, located to the southwest of the old capital Memphis, Thebes would remain an important religious center. This would determine the religious and political history of Ancient Egypt for the following millennium.

The kings of the 12th Dynasty ruled the country firmly and were able to maintain the power of balance between the central authorities and the local administrations, to their own advantage. They also imposed their rule on northern Nubia and pacified the Bedouins in the deserts to the east and west of the Nile Valley. Imposing fortresses were built in Nubia and at the Eastern border, to protect trading routes from raiding Bedouins.

The wealth and stability the 12th Dynasty has brought to the country is evidenced in the high quality of statues, reliefs and paintings found throughout the country. Rather typical for this period are statues with big ears, seen by some as an indication that the king and his nobility listened to their subjects.

Deviating from the standard way of representing kings, Sesostri III and his successor Amenemhat III (see image to the left) had themselves portrayed as mature, aging men. This is often interpreted as a portrayal of the burden of power and kingship. That the change in representation was indeed ideological and should not be interpreted as the portrayal of an aging king is shown by the fact that in one single relief, Sesostri

III was represented as a vigorous young man, following the centuries old tradition, and as a mature aging king.

The dynasty came to an end when Amenemhat IV appears to have died without male heirs and he was succeeded by his sister/wife Nefrusobek.

Reference: *Monarchs of the Nile* Aidan Dodson, 1995

Amenemhat I - Amenemhet I - Amen is at the Head - (1991-1962 BC)



Amenemhat I was the first ruler of the 12th Dynasty.

Some Egyptologists believe that recovery from the First Intermediate Period into the Middle Kingdom only really began with his rule. He was probably not of royal blood, at least if he is the same Vizier that functioned under his predecessor, Mentuhotep IV. Perhaps either Mentuhotep IV had no heir, or he was simply a weak leader. This vizier, named Amenemhet, recorded an inscription when Mentuhotep IV sent him to Wadi Hammamt. The inscription records two omens. The first tells us of a gazelle that gave birth to her calf atop the stone that had been chosen for the lid of the King's sarcophagus. The second was of a ferocious rainstorm that, when subsided, disclosed a well 10 cubits square and full of water. Of course that was a very good omen in this barren landscape.

Many Egyptologists believe that Amenemhet's inscription implies that a great ruler will come to the throne of Egypt upon the death of Mentuhotep IV, who will lead the country into prosperity.

It is fairly certain that Amenemhet the vizier was predicting his own rise to the throne as Amenemhet I. However, we are told that he had at least two other competitors to the throne. One was called Inyotef, and the other a Segerseni from Nubia. It would appear that he quickly dealt with these obstacles. We believe that he ruled Egypt for almost 30 years. Peter A. Clayton places his reign between the years of 1991 and 1962 BC while the Oxford History of Ancient Egypt gives him a reign lasting from 1985 through 1956 BC. Dodson has his reign lasting from 1994 until 1964 BC.

Amenemhet I's Horus name, Wehem-mesut, means "he who repeats births", and almost certainly was chosen to commemorate the new dynasty and a return to the values and prosperity of a united Egypt. Amenemhet (Amenemhat) was his birth name and means "Amun is at the Head". He was called Ammenemes I by the Greeks. His throne name was Sehetep-ib-re, which means "Satisfied is the Heart of Re".

Neferu, who was the principal wife of Senwosret I, the king's mother, Nefret, and a principal wife, Nefrytatenen

Amenemhet was probably the son of a woman named Nofret (Nefret), from Elephantine near modern Aswan, and a priest called Senusret, according to an inscription at Thebes. So his origins are probably southern Egypt. We know of three possible wives including Nefrytatenen (Nefrutoteen, Nefrytatenen), who may have been the mother of Amenemhet I's successor, Senusret I, Dedyet, who may also have been his sister, and Sobek'neferu, Neferu).

It is fairly clear that Amenemhet established Egypt's first co-regency with his son, Senusret I, in about the older king's 20th year of rule. He was not only seeking to assure the succession of his proper heir, but also providing the young prince valuable training under his tutelage. Senusret was given several active roles in Amenemhet I's government, specifically including matters related to the military matters. Several pieces of literature that probably date from his reign, some of which appears to support his reign with fables of kingship. One, the Discourse of Neferty, has a ruler emerging named Ameny, who was foretold by a prophet in the Old Kingdom (Neferty).

Neferti was a Heliopolis sage who seems familiar to us from Djedi in the Papyrus Westcar. He is summoned to the court of Snofru, during whose reign the story is supposed to have taken place. This tale has Amenemhat delivering Egypt from chaos, but it should be noted that it is the chaos of the late 11th Dynasty, not the First Intermediate Period.

Then a king will come from the South, Amenemhat, the justified, my name, Son of a woman of Ta-Seti, child of Upper Egypt, He will take the white crown, he will join the Two Mighty Ones (the two crowns)

Asiatics will fall to his sword,
Libyans will fall to his flame,
Rebels to his wrath, traitors to his might,
As the serpent on his brow subdues the rebels for him,
One will build the Walls-of-the-Ruler,
To bar Asiatics from entering Egypt...

We do not know what year this literature dates to within Amenemhat I's reign. But while there are other texts that refer to the chaos before the arrival of new kings, the references to Asiatics and the Walls-of-the-Ruler are new.

Amenemhat I set about consolidating the country in a very purposeful manner. He moved his capital north to the capital he apparently established named Amenemhat-*itj-tawy*, which means, "Amenemhat the Seizer of the Two lands". It was located south of Memphis, on the edge of the Fayoum Oasis, though the city ruins have not yet been discovered. This gave him a more central control of Egypt, as well as placing him nearer to problem areas in the Delta. It also signaled the end of an old era and new beginnings. This move was perhaps only carried out a short time after he took the throne.

Many Egyptologists believe that the move was made at the very beginning of his reign, while a few believe it may have been much later, around the time of his twentieth year as ruler. However, he did begin a tomb at Thebes, and then abandoned it for a pyramid at el-Lisht, near the new capital. It appears that the work on the tomb at Thebes may have taken between three and five years to complete. Also, there are very few of his monuments located near Thebes, suggesting that he soon moved away.

His pyramid at el Lisht is instructional, for it seems to portray a return to some of the values of the Old Kingdom, while still embracing the Theban concepts of the region of his birth. Egyptologists who believe Amenemhat I may have waited until his twentieth year to make the move to his new city base their evidence on an inscription found on the foundation blocks of the pyramid's mortuary temple. It records Amenemhat's royal jubilee, and also that year one of a new king had elapsed, suggesting that the pyramid was started very late in the king's reign. Therefore, considerable debate remains over the timing of his move.

He also reorganized the administration of the country, keeping the nomarchs who had supported him, while weakening the regional governors by appointing new officials at Asyut, Cusae and Elephantine. An inscription records that he also divided the nomes

(provinces) into different sets of towns and redistributed the territories by reference to the Nile flood. We see a steady march during Amenemhet I's rule back to a more centralized government, together with an increase in bureaucracy. Another move, both to dilute the army's power and to raise personnel for coming conflicts, was his reintroduction of conscription.

Undoubtedly, in the Discourse of Neferty, Asiatics refer to the people who were causing trouble on the Egypt's eastern frontier. One of Amenemhet I's earliest campaigns were against these Asiatics, though the scale of these operations is unknown. He drove these people back, and indeed did build the Walls-of-the-Ruler, as series of fortifications along Egypt's northeastern frontier. However, even as late as his 24th year of rule, we still find inscriptions recording expeditions against these "and-dweller". None of these fortifications has ever been found, though the remains of a canal in the region may date from the period. Apparently, in the midst of the Asiatic campaign, he also found time to crush a few unrepentant local governors (nomarchs).

In Nubia, Amenemhet I first pushed his army southward to Elephantine, where he consolidated his rule and seems to have been satisfied for a number of years. This expedition was apparently lead by Khnemhotpe I, governor of the Oryx nome, who traveled up the Nile with 20 boats. But by year 29 of his rule, the king appears to have no longer been happy with the lose trading and quarrying network with Nubia that we find in the Old Kingdom.

The new policy was one of conquest and colonization with the principle aim of obtaining raw materials, especially gold. An inscription at the northern Nubian site of Korosko about half way between the first and second cataracts (rapids) states that the people of Wawat (northern Nubia) were defeated in his 29th year, and he apparently drove his army as far south as the second cataract.

In order to protect Egypt and fortify captured territory in Nubia, he founded a fortress at Semna and Quban in the region of the second Nile Cataract, which would begin a string of future 12th Dynasty fortresses. Along with protecting his newly acquired territory and the gold mines in Wadi Allaqi, he also created a stranglehold over economic contacts with Upper Nubia and further south. We also know that he constructed a fortress at Mendes named Rawaty.

From a foreign relations standpoint, we also know that diplomatic and commercial relations were renewed, after a long absence, with Byblos and the Aegean world.

Amenemhet I took part in a number of building projects. Besides his fortresses, we know he built at Babastis, el-Khatana and Tanis. He undertook important building works at Karnak, from which a few statues and granite naos survive. He may have even established the original temple of Mut to the south of the Temple of Amun.

He also worked at Koptos (Coptos), where he partly decorated the temple of Min, at Abydos, where he dedicated a granite altar to Osiris, at Dendera, where he built a granite gateway to Hathor and at Memphis, where he built a temple of Ptah. Also a little north of Tell el-Dab'a, he apparently began a small mudbrick temple at Ezbet Rushdi, that was later expanded by Senusret III.

Religiously, being from southern Egypt, Amenemhet I's allegiance was probably to the god Amun, and in fact, we find from this period forward the rise of Amun, at the expense of Montu, god of war, as the supreme deity of Thebes.

It is also notable that we find an increase in the mineral wealth of the royal family. We find a huge increase in the jewelry caches found in several 12th Dynasty royal burials. It is obvious from several sources of evidence that even the standard of living for middle class Egyptians was on the increase, though their level of wealth was proportional to their official offices.

Amenemhet I appears to have been a very wise leader, setting about to correct the problems of the First Intermediate Period, protecting Egypt's borders from invasion and assuring a legitimate succession.

Yet he was murdered in an apparent harem plot while his co-regent was leading a campaign in Libya. Again, we find two literary works, the Tale of Sinuhe and the Instructions of Amenemhet I, reflecting this king's tragic end. One literary work from the time of Senusret I presents the account of Amenemhet I's murder, supposedly provided by the king himself from beyond the grave:

"It was after supper, when night had fallen, and I had spent an hour of happiness. I was asleep upon my bed, having become weary, and my heart had begun to follow sleep. When weapons of my counsel were wielded, I had become like a snake of the necropolis. As I came to, I awoke to fighting, and found that it was an attack of the bodyguard. If I had quickly taken weapons in my hand, I would have made the wretches retreat with a charge! But there is none mighty in the night, none who can fight alone; no success will come without a helper. Look, my injury happened while I was without you, when the entourage had not yet heard that I would hand over to you when I had not yet sat with you, that I might make counsels for you; for I did not plan it, I did not foresee it, and my heart had not taken thought of the negligence of servants."

Apparently, his foresight in creating the co-regency with his son proved successful, for Senusret I succeeded his father and there seems to have been little or no disruption in the administration of the country.

Amenemhat I was murdered. His body was buried in his pyramid at el-Lisht, near the Fayum oasis.



Image of Amenemhet I from his mortuary complex at el-lisht

[The Pyramid of Amenemhet I](#)

Sesostris I - Senusret Kheper-ka-re - 'Man of Wosret' - (1971 - 1926 BC)

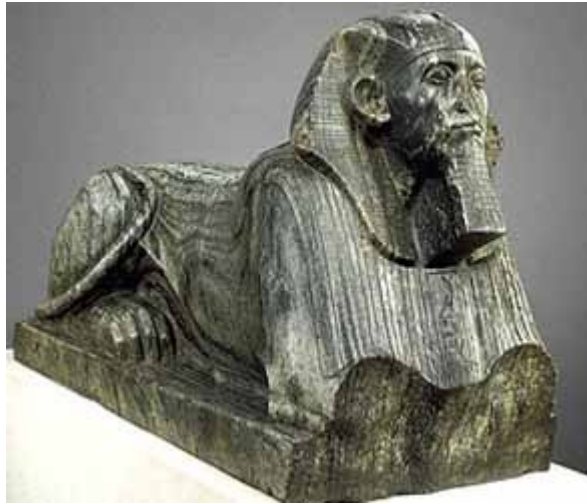


Senusret I was the second king of the 12th Dynasty.

He ascended to the throne after the murder of his father, Amenemhet I. There had apparently been a harem plot, and with good timing, Amenemhet I was assassinated in the absence of his son, who was fighting in Libya. It would seem that his son either swiftly left the campaign, or was already heading home at the time of the murder. However, this was not the first harem conspiracy, and Amenemhet I had performed his due diligence in respect to assuring a successful transition for his heir. For the first time that we know of in Egyptian history, Senusret I was made a co-regent.

Senusret I was this king's birth name, and means "Man of goddess Wosret". However, it was also the name, we believe, of his non-royal grandfather and so it may give little insight into his character. In references, he is also sometimes called Senwosret I, or Sesostris I (Greek). His throne name was Kheper-ka-re, which means, "The Soul of Re comes into Being". His mother was probably Neferytatenen (Nefrutoteen, Nefrytatenen), one of Amenemhet I's chief wives.

He married a Queen Nefru, who was the mother of his successor son, Amenemhet II. Like his father, Amenemhet II was also made a coregent, but only perhaps three years prior to Senusret I's death. The coregency was recorded by a private stele of Simontu that is now in the British Museum. From her pyramid near her father's we also know that he had a daughter (or possibly a wife) by the name of Itakalet. He may have had other daughters, including princesses Nefru-Sobek, Nefru-Ptah and Nenseddjedet.



Senusret I probably ruled Egypt for a period of about 34 years after his father's death during a period in Egypt's history where literature and craftsmanship was at its peak. We believe he may have been a co-regent of his father for perhaps another ten years. He probably ruled Egypt from about 1956 through 1911 BC.

It was a period of affluence, and a remarkable time for mineral wealth, gold and the fine jewelry produced with this abundance. Jewelry masterpieces have been found, particularly in the tombs of the royal ladies at Dahshur and Lahun, attributable to his reign. Considerable efforts were made to procure amethyst, turquoise, copper and gniess for both jewelry and sculptures. But it was also a time of great stability and development.



Senusret I embraces the creator god, Ptah at Karnak

However, we also learn from letters of an old farmer named Hekanakhte to his family, that there was apparently a famine during the time of Senusret, a fact that is also

implied by an inscription in the tomb of a nomarch (governor) named Amenemhat at Beni Hassan. But along with this news, we also are provided considerable insight into the life of the common Egyptians of this period by Hekanakhte's letters, and a better understanding of the details of agricultural.

He continued many of his father's policies, including the expansion in northern Nubia. We know that he sent one expedition to Nubia in his tenth year of reign, and that eight years later, he sent another army as far south as the second cataract. His general, Mentuhotep, went even deeper into Nubia.

However, Senusret I established Egypt's southern border at the fortress of Buhen near the second cataract, where he placed a garrison and a victory stele, thereby adding to the already substantial military presence established by his father. Now, there were at least 13 fortresses that extended as far as the Second Cataract, and while Egypt's border may have been at the Nile's second cataract, he exercised control of Nubia as far as the Third Cataract. Inscriptions attributable to Senusret I can be found as far south as the island of Argo, north of modern Dongola.

He also protected the Delta region and the Western desert Oases from Libyan invasion by means of a series of military campaigns and by establishing control over oases in the Libyan Desert. Several of the expeditions also appear to have been lead by him personally.

However, he radically changed the policy towards Syria/Palestine by seeking stable commercial and diplomatic relations rather than a policy of expansion and control. Trading caravans passed between Syria and Egypt exchanging cedar and ivory for Egyptian goods.

Religiously, Senusret contributed considerable attention to the cult of Osiris, and over his long rule, this deity's beliefs and practices flourished in Egypt. Osiris was a god of the people and in expanding this cult, Senusret I gave his subjects what John Wilson has described as the 'democratization of the afterlife'.



Senusret I with Amun-Re at Karnak

Senusret I had already established himself as a builder during the co-regency with his father by extending and embellishing some major temples, particularly at Karnak, where he is considered to have founded the temple of Ipet sut (Karnak), and Heliopolis.

As early as year two of his reign, he rebuilt the very important temple of Re-Atum at Heliopolis, a center of the sun cult. He probably even personally participated in the foundation ceremonies for the temple's reconstruction.

He also had two, massive 20 meter (66 foot) red granite obelisks erected at the same temple on the occasion of his jubilee celebrating his 30th year in office. These monoliths would have weighed 121 tons each. One of the pair remains the oldest standing obelisk in Egypt. He also built the famous bark shrine, or White Chapel, that has been reconstructed by Henri Chevrier in the Open Air Museum at Karnak.

It was built in order to celebrate his sed festival (Jubilee) in the 30th year of his reign, but the blocks for the temple were reused to build the third Pylon at Karnak. A scene within the White Chapel records the coronation of Senusret I, and is the oldest such scene so far discovered.



The White Chapel at Karnak

The more important projects included remodeling the temple of Khenti-amentiu-Osiris at Abydos. He also erected many memorial stele and small shrines, or cenotaphs, at Abydos, a practice that would be followed by many Middle and New Kingdom pharaohs. One also also finds temples built by Sunusret I at Elepantine and Tod. In fact, he is attested to at almost three dozen sites from Alexandria to Aswan and down into Nubia where he carried out building projects.

Senusret I also set up a program to build monuments in each of the main cult sites all over Egypt. This was really an extension of an Old Kingdom policy, but in reality he was following his fathers efforts to consolidate and centralize power. This move undermined the power bases of local temples and priests.

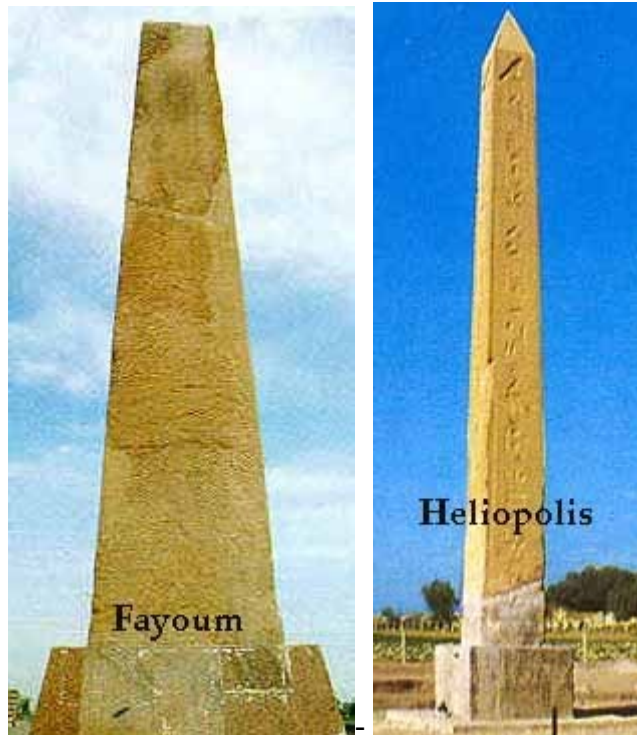


In order to facilitate these building projects, he sent expeditions to exploit the stone quarries of Wadi Hammamat, the Sinai at Serabit el-Khadim, Hatnub, where two expeditions were sent in years 23 and 31 of his reign for alabaster, and Wadi el Hudi. One of these expeditions extracted enough stone to make sixty sphinxes and 150 statues. Many of his statues did not survive the ages, but the Egyptian Antiquity Museum includes a large collection of those that did.



Fragment from Karnak pillar with King and Horus

He also built a large pyramid, very reminiscent of older complexes, at Lisht, near Itjtawy, the capital apparently founded by his father. His pyramid is located just to the south of his father's pyramid at el-Lisht.



[The Pyramid of Senusret I](#)

Amenemhat II - (1929 BC - 1895 BC)



He was the third king of the 12th Dynasty

His throne name was 'Nub-kau-re'
 'Golden are the Souls of Re'
 Ammenemes II (Greek)
 Amun is at the Head



Amenemhet II was the son of Senusret I and one of his chief queens, Nefru. Like his father, he served the first three years of his reign as co-regent with his father. During this time Amenemhet II led a Nubian expedition.

Family:

Apparently, Amenemhet II also took his son, Senusret II as a co-regent, but also for only a brief time before his own death. He had four daughters - Ita, Khnemet, Itiueret and Sithathormeret

Dates:

According to Manetho, Amenemhat II ruled for 38 years, a number which is generally accepted. The Turin King list is fragmentary at this point and only confirms 10 or more years. In view of the long reign of his predecessor, it is not impossible that Amenemhat II was already quite aged when he came to the throne, in which case a shorter reign is to be favored. The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt gives his reign as lasting from 1911 through 1877 BC, while Clayton gives it as 1926 through 1895 BC.

Government:

Domestically, Amenemhet II failed in one important respect. Under the rule of his predecessors, nomarchs, who were basically the governors of the various nomes (provinces), had been personally appointed by the king. This was a measure taken to assure the centralization of government. The First Intermediate Period was at least partially caused the chaos resulting from strong regional rulers who destabilized this central control.

However, Amenemhat II apparently allowed this important office to revert back to a hereditary position. The nomarchs soon took advantage of this change by adapting pretentious titles sometimes imitating those of the royal court. However, Amenemhat

did keep a firm hand on these matters and appears to not let these local rulers forget their allegiance to the crown. In return for royal favors, they were expected to help protect the Egyptian borders, to undertake expeditions for the king and to generally act as his deputies.

Foreign Policy:

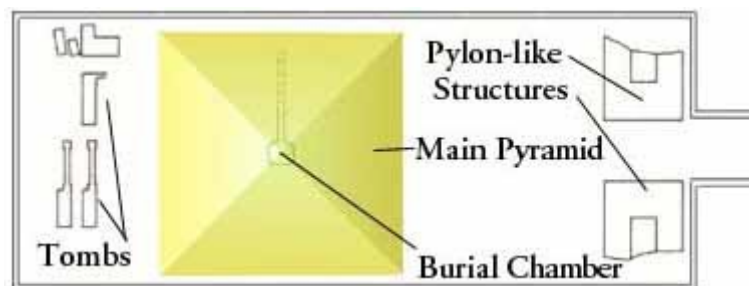
The foreign policy of Amenemhat II appear to have been a continuation of his father's. There is evidence of extensive trade with parts of the Near East, Mesopotamia and even Crete. Several Egyptian objects, among them small statues and scarabs, were found at several Near Eastern sites. Among them a sphinx of princess Ita, that was probably sent to Syria as a trading gift. Especially favored were the Syrian port of Byblos, where the native ruling elite even made short inscriptions in hieroglyphic, referring to Egyptian gods. The foundation deposits of the temple of Tod, dated to the reign of Amenemhat, contained objects of Mesopotamian and Cretan origin.

Not all contacts with Asia were as peaceful, however, as is shown by raids of Bedouin, probably in the Sinai and some Egyptian military activity against two unnamed Asian cities.

There was also at least one military expedition against Nubia and during his 28th year, Amenemhat II sent the official Khentikhetaywer as an envoy to Punt.

Monuments:

Not many buildings from the time of Amenemhat II remain. A pylon at Hermopolis, in Middle Egypt and the foundation deposits at Tod are, along with his pyramid at Dashur, the only notable monuments that were left from his reign.

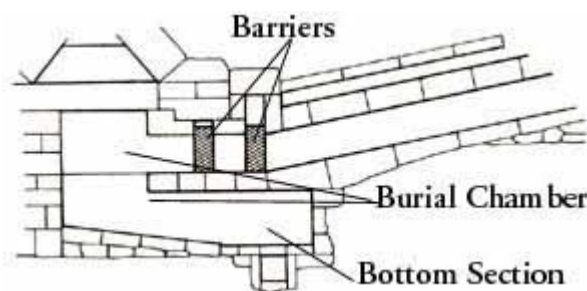


The choice of location for his pyramid at Dashur, not far from the Bent and Red Pyramids built by 4th Dynasty king Snofru, raises the question why he did not build his funerary monument at El-Lisht like his father and grandfather. It is possible that Amenemhat sought to create a relationship between his dynasty and that of Snofru by doing so.

The pyramid complex is poorly preserved and is mostly known because of the exquisite jewelry that was found in some of the tombs of Amenemhat's daughters, located in the forecourt of the complex. The jewelry included rings, braces, necklaces and diadems and shows the excellent craftsmanship of the era.

From 1894 through 1895, Jacques de Morgan made a cursory investigation of the ruins. Unfortunately he was too focused on the jewelry finds in some surrounding princess' tombs that he never examined the mortuary temple, the causeway or the valley temple. In fact, no casing stones have ever been found nor even the base of the pyramid cleared for a proper measuring. Therefore, we are not sure of its size, the angle of its slop, or its height.

The mortuary temple was almost completely destroyed, though we know it was probably called "Lighted is the place of Amenemhet's pleasures". The ruins, which stand to the east of the pyramid have yet to be closely examined, though they must be very inviting to archaeologists. There are many building fragments, some of which include relief decorations. Most interesting, however, might be the massive, tower-like structures resembling pylons in the temple's east facade.



The causeway, which was broad with a steep slope and enters the enclosure wall on the middle of the east side, has not been investigated at all, and we are told that the valley temple has not even been found. The core of the pyramid was built much like that of Senusret I's pyramid, with a core that had corners radiating out. A framework was made with horizontal lines of blocks to form a grid, or framework between the corners. Here, however, the filling was sand. The entire complex was surrounded by an enclosure wall that was much more rectangular than that found in older pyramids. It was oriented east-west.

Behind the pyramid between it and the west part of the enclosure wall are found tombs of the royal family. They belong to his other son prince Amenemhetankh and princesses Ita, Khnemmet, Itiueret and Sithathormeret. Within these tombs, Morgan found the remains of funerary equipment, including wooden coffins, canopic chests and alabaster vessels for perfumes. But of course he also found wonderful jewelry in the tombs of Ita and Khnemmet, that stole his attention. These pieces may now be found in the Treasure Chamber of the Cairo Museum.

Books: Genut

We have considerable knowledge of Amenemhet II's reigns because of a number of important documents. Some historical information about the 12th Dynasty comes from a set of official records known as the genut, or 'day-books'.

They were found in the temple at Tod. Some of Amenemhet II's buildings also contain parts of these annals. They describe the day to day process of running the royal palace. One very important set of annals were discovered at Mit Rahina (a part of ancient Memphis) that record detailed descriptions of donations made to temples,

lists of statues and buildings, reports of both military and trading expeditions and even royal activities such as hunting. These documents not only provide information on Amenemhet II, but other kings of the period as well.

Amenemhet II is probably best known for consolidating the work of his predecessors in foreign affairs. He exchanged gifts with other rulers in the Mediterranean (Levant) region. We find jewelry inscribed with his name in royal tombs at Byblos in Lebanon, as well as local copies of Egyptian jewelry. These items were particularly prevalent in the tomb of a local prince named Ipshemuabi. In addition, native rulers at Byblos even wrote short inscriptions in hieroglyphs, held the Egyptian title of count, and made references to Egyptian gods.

They acquired royal and private statuary. On the other hand, four bronze boxes found at the temple of Montu at Tod and inscribed on their lids with the name of Amenemhet II bore a large number of silver cups of Lavantine and Aegean origin. There were also cylinder seals and lapis Lazuli amulets from Mesopotamia. These items were probably either a gift, or tribute, and it is noteworthy that at the time, silver was more rare than gold in Egypt, so also more valuable.

The Shipwrecked Sailor

One story during the time of Amenemhet II tells of the travels of a ship captain who had been to a magic island in the sea far south beyond Nubia. The sailor told the vizier (prime minister) about a tempest which arose suddenly and drove the ship towards a mysterious land. He suddenly heard a noise like thunder, and saw a huge serpent with a beard. Upon hearing that the sailor was sent by the pharaoh, the serpent let him go back, with gifts to "Amenemhet". It told him that it was Amon-Ra's blessing that has made this island rich and lacking nothing. Upon hearing this amusing story, "Amenemhet II" ordered it to be documented on a papyrus. The story is known to historians as "The Shipwrecked Sailor".

Senusret II (Khakheperre) - (1897 BC - 1878 BC)



Senusret II was the fourth king of the 12th Dynasty.

His name means 'Man of Goddess Wosret'. It was the name that seems to enter the royal lineage because of this king's non-royal, great, great grandfather, the original Senusret and father of the founder of the Dynasty, Amenemhet I.

Senusret II's name is also found in various references as Senwosret II, or the Greek form, Sesostris II. His throne name was Kha-khaeper-re, meaning "Soul of Re comes into Being".

He succeeded his father, Amenemhet II in about 1895 BC, after a short co-regency of at least three years.

References differ on the length of his rule, varying between about seven and fifteen years. The *Oxford History of Ancient Egypt* gives his reign as 1877-1870, while Clayton gives him a reign from 1897-1878 BC.

A group of statues was discovered, two of which had been usurped by Ramesses II, portraying Senusret II with wide, muscular shoulders like his father, but with a more vigorous face, lacking the blandness of older 12th Dynasty statuary.

This was a period of fine portraiture art, reflected in the distinctive broad cheekbones and other characteristics portrayed in the statues. In fact, even a number of private statues have been found that also reflect this high art, and the late 12th dynasty is seen as a milestone of human portraiture in Egyptian art.

Better known than Senusret II's statues are a pair of highly polished black granite statues of a lady Nefret, who did not carry the title of "Royal Wife", but who was probably either a wife of Senusret II's who died before he ascended the throne, or a sister.



She did, however, have other titles usually reserved for queens.

His principal royal wife was Khnumetneferhedjetweret (Weret), who's body was found in a tomb under the pyramid of her son, Senusret III at Dahshure. Senusret III would become Senusret II's successor.

So far there is no evidence of a co-regency with his father as there had been for every king from the time of Amenemhet I.

Senusret II probably also had several daughters, one of which would have probably been Sathathoriunet (Sithathoriunet), who's jewelry was discovered in a tomb behind the king's pyramid.

Like his father, Senusret II's reign is considered to be a peaceful one, using more diplomacy with neighbors than warfare. We are told that trade with the Near East was particularly prolific. His cordial relations with the regional leaders in Egypt is attested to at Beni Hassan, for example, and especially in the tomb of Khnumhotep II, who he gave many honors.

There seem to be no recorded military campaigns during his rule, though he undoubtedly protected Egypt's mineral interests and their expanded territory in Nubia.



A Stele of Senusret II in Brown Quartzite

His efforts seem to have been more directed at expanding cultivation within the Fayoum rather than making war with his neighbors and regional nobles.

In the Fayoum, his projects turned a considerable area from marshlands into agricultural land. He established a Fayoum irrigation project, including building a dyke and digging canals to connect the Fayoum with a waterway known today as Bahr Yusef.

He seems to have had a great interest in the Fayoum, and elevated the region in importance. Its growing recognition is attested to by a number of pyramids built before, and after his reign in or near the oasis (though the Fayoum is not a true oasis). It should also be remembered that kings usually built their royal palaces near their mortuary complexes, so it is likely that many of the future kings made their home in the Fayoum.

These later kings would also continued and expanded upon Senusret II's irrigation projects in the Fayoum. Senusret II built a unique statue shrine of Qasr es-Sagha on the north eastern corner of the region, though it was left undecorated and incomplete.

Senusret II's Pyramid

His father, Amenemhet II built his pyramid at Dahshure, but Senusret II built his pyramid closer to the Fayoum Oasis at Lahun.



His pyramid definitely established a new tradition in pyramid building, perhaps begun by his father.

Senusret II chose to build his pyramid, called Senusret Shines, near the modern town of Lahun (Kahun) at the opening of the Hawara basin near the Fayoum rather than at Dahshure where his father's Amenemhet II pyramid is located.

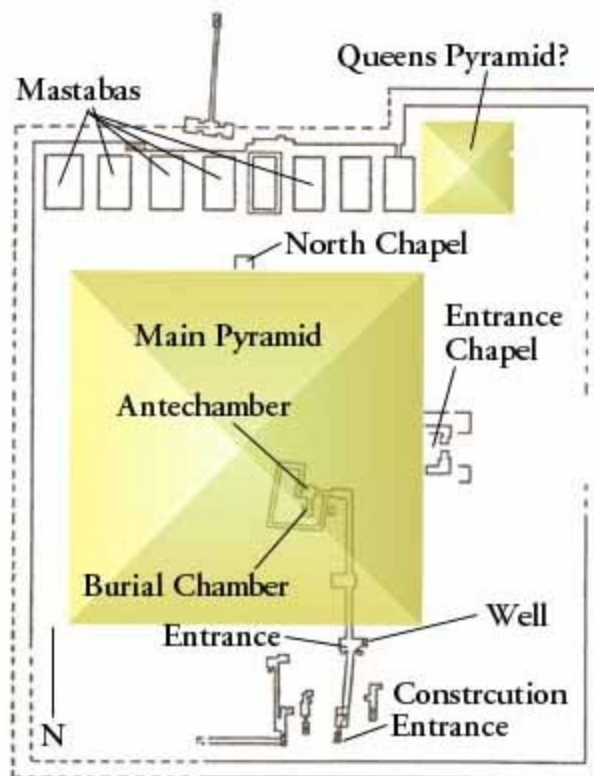
The location of Senusret II's valley temple is known but no ground plan can be made from its ruins. The causeway is likewise ruined, but must have been broad, and of the completely destroyed mortuary temple on the east side of the pyramid, all that is known is that it must have been built of decorated granite, judging from the few fragments that remain.

Beginning with Senusret II, the location of the door was less important from a religious than from a security standpoint, so rather than being on the north side of the structure, it was hidden in the pavement of the south side.

To the south side of the pyramid Petrie excavated four shaft tombs that belonged to Senusret II's family and in one of these, discovered a fine, gold inlaid uraeus that may have come from the king's mummy.

In building this pyramid Senusret II's architects took advantage of a natural stump of yellow limestone that they cut down into four steps to serve as the pyramid's base core. Mudbrick was used to build the upper part of the core, and as several pyramids before, wings were built out from this core and cross walls within the wings were built to form a framework.

The resulting sections were then filled with mudbrick. Also like some prior 12th Dynasty pyramids, the casing was set into a foundation trench at the base of the pyramid. Most of the casing was carried off to build a structure for Ramesses II, though parts of the black granite pyramidion that set atop the pyramid have been found. There was also a cobble filled drainage ditch around the pyramid that was filled with sand to channel rain water.



While the pyramid had been robbed in antiquity, it nevertheless took Petrie months to locate the entrance to this pyramid. The reason is that for the first time, the builder's were more interested in security than religious tradition, and therefore hid the entry passage in the pavement of the pyramid courtyard near the east end of the pyramid's south side.

Prior to this, just about all pyramid entrances were in the middle of the north side. This was because in the astral and celestial religion of the old kingdom, the king was to leave his tomb to the north where he was himself to become both a star and a deity. However, because of the rise in the cult of Osiris, this became less important, and it was more meaningful for the tomb to resemble the underworld of Osiris.

Interestingly, the builders of the pyramid must have thought this would be sufficient insurance against thieves, as they did not even include a barrier in the entrance corridor.

Also interesting is the "entrance chapel, not located above the entrance, or on the north side of the pyramid (these are also typically referred to as "North Chapels").

It was located in the middle of the east wall of the pyramid. However, there was actually a north chapel, though smaller and less structurally similar to older north chapels than the entrance chapel on the east side of the pyramid.

The vaulted entrance corridor was too narrow for a large sarcophagus and the blocks used to line the burial chamber, though another entrance was hidden farther south, beneath a sloping passage to the tomb of an unknown princess. This shaft is about 16

meters (52 feet) deep, and a corridor at the bottom leads to an entrance hall below the formal entrance shaft.

The hall has a vaulted ceiling and a niche at the east end of the hall contains a ritual well, the bottom of which has never been reached. It drops to at least the water table. Because ritual shafts did not become prominent until much later, some Egyptologists maintain that the shaft may have been built to monitor the ground water, or for other unknown purposes.

After the entrance hall another corridor gradually rises before passing through a chamber to the left and finally arriving at an antechamber. From the antechamber, the substructure takes a 90 degree left turn, passing through a short corridor to the burial chamber, which lies under the southeast quadrant of the pyramid. The burial chamber is sheathed in granite and has a gabled roof. A red granite sarcophagus fills the west end of the chamber. Before it stood an alabaster offering table.

From the southeast corner of the burial chamber a short corridor leads to a small side chamber where leg bones, presumably of the king, were found. At the northwest corner at the head of the sarcophagus is the entrance to a passage that loops around the burial chamber to a doorway in the short corridor between the antechamber and the burial chamber.

This corridor presented a symbolic exit to the north for the king's spirit. But it also creates a symbolic subterranean island that can be related to the god, Osiris, who's worship was on the rise during the 12th Dynasty.

The enclosure wall, like that of his grandfather's, Senusret I, had a limestone casing with niches reminiscent of Djoser's complex. This was a revival of archaic funerary enclosures. Another strong Osiris influence, the "grove surrounding the "mound", was represented by a row of trees planted around the outer wall that was covered in mudbrick.

In addition to the tombs of the princesses to the southeast, between the pyramid and the north section of the enclosure wall, eight mastabas were built using mudbrick to cover a superstructure carved from the bedrock, similar to the manner in which the pyramid was built.

A small pyramid lies at the north end of this row of mastabas, thought to be that of a queen. If it is not the pyramid of a queen, but an unlikely cult pyramid, it would have been the last such structure built, rather than that of his grandfather's, Senusret I. Though this pyramid does have a North Chapel, Petrie never found a subterranean structure even after exhaustive investigation.

The only evidence we do have that the pyramid belonged to a queen is its placement within the complex and a partial name from a vase that Petrie found in a foundation deposit.

West of the entrance shaft of the pyramid Petrie discovered the ruins of the tomb of Princess Sathathoriunet (Sithathoriunet), where he discovered the famous Treasure of

el-Lahun, which included wonderful jewelry and other items from the her burial equipment.

These items included a gold headband, a gold necklace of small leopard's heads, two gold pectorial ornamented with precious stones one of which was inscribed with Senusret II's name and the second with the name of Amenemhet III. There were also other bracelets, rings and alabaster and obsidian vessels that were decorated with gold, all of which today can be found in the Egyptian Antiquities Museum.

Nearby the complex to the northwest lies the ruins of the pyramid town that grew up around the construction of Senusret II's pyramid. Originally named Hetep Senusret, meaning "May Senusret be at Peace". It has provided considerable information to Egyptologists on the lives of common Egyptians and urbanism. This ancient village is today known as Lahun, or Kahun, after the local nearby village.

Senusret II is further attested to by a sphinx, now in the Egyptian Antiquity Museum in Cairo and by inscriptions of both he and his father near Aswan.

It should also be mentioned that the pyramid town associated with Senusret II's complex, known as Lahun (Kahun) after the nearby modern village, provided considerable information to archaeologists and Egyptologists on the common lives of Egyptians. Pyramid towns were communities of workmen, craftsmen and administrators that grew up around a king's pyramid project.

Senusret III (1878 BC - 1839 BC)





The fifth king of the 12th Dynasty

Senusret III is probably the best attested king of the New Kingdom. He ruled the country for perhaps as long as 37 years as the 5th pharaoh of Egypt's 12th Dynasty from around 1878 until 1841 BC. He is probably also the best known of the Middle Kingdom pharaohs to the public because of his many naturalistic statues showing a man with often heavy eye-lids and lined continence.

Later statues seem to portray him with increasing "world-weariness". Taken along with contemporary text, these statues seem to wish us to believe Senusret III was a king possessed of a concerned, serious and thoughtful regard for his high office.

Senusret III's statuary is much looser in terms of the rigid ideological representations of earlier kings and illustrates a shift in both the function of art and a change in the ideology surrounding the king. The human qualities of the statues give a sense of age and tension, rather than the all powerful king portrayed in older works. We see in these statues a shift away from the king as god, and more towards the king as leader.

Senusret was this king's birth name, which means, "Man of Goddess Wosret". He is also sometimes referred to as Senwosret III and Senusert III, or by the Greeks, Sesostri III.

His throne name was Kha-khau-re, meaning "Appearing like the Souls of Re". Senusret III was most surely the son of Senusret II, changing a trend of having alternate leaders named Senusret and Amenemhet.

We know of no co-regency with his father, though most of the previous 12th Dynasty kings shared at least a few years of their reign with their sons, and a co-regency would clear up some questions about Senusret III's long reign.

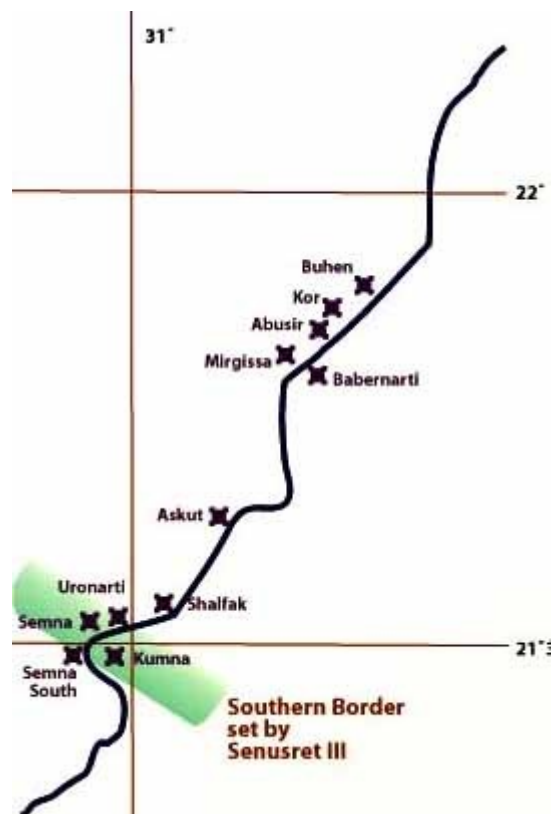
His mother may have been Khnumetneferhedjetweret (Khanumet, Weret), who we believe was buried in a tomb near his pyramid at Dahshur.

He was married to a principle queen named Mereret, who outlived him, and may have also been married to his sister, Sit-Hathor. His son and successor was Amenemhet III.



A Papyrus commemorating Senusret III's Sed-festival

Senusret III must have been a very dominant figure within his time. Manetho describes him as a great warrior, not surprisingly, because he also says he was "of great height at 4 cubits, 3 palms and 2 fingers" (over 6 ft, 6 in or 2 meters). In addition, he may also have been the model for the Sesostris of Maetho and Herodotus, who was probably a composite, heroic Middle Kingdom ruler who was suppose to be a model for future kings.



While there had been fortifications built in Nubia,

Apparently, the Nubians were a troublesome lot during his reign, for Senusret III would again have to mount campaigns in at least the years 8, 10, 16 and 19 of his reign. Regardless, these campaigns seem to have been for the most part successful, for the king had inscribed on a great stele at Semna erected in year 8 of his rule, now in Berlin, "I carried off their women, I carried off their subjects, went forth to their wells, smote their bulls; I reaped their grain, and set fire thereto". In other words, he killed their men, enslaved their women and children, burnt their crops and poisoned their wells. The stele also provides that no Nubians were allowed to take their herds or boats to the north of the specified border.

To facilitate these military actions in Nubia, he had an existing bypass canal around the First Cataract (rapids) at Aswan, originally dug in the Old Kingdom by Merenre - or Pepi I cleared, broadened and deepened. According to an inscription, he had it repaired again in year eight of his reign. This canal was near the island of Sehel.

His predecessors had also established a policy of building fortresses in Nubia, but in order to further secure the area, Senusret III built more fortresses than any of the other Middle Kingdom rulers. In the 64 km (40 mile) length of the Second Cataract in Lower (northern) Nubia there were no less than eight such fortresses between Semna and Buhen. However, many Egyptologists disagree with exactly how many of these fortresses were built by Senusret III, or were instead, simply rededicated or enlarged.

These fortresses were in close contact with each other, and with the region's vizier, reporting the slightest movements of Nubians. At least some of the fortresses appear also to have been specialized.

For example, the one at Mirgissa was more involved with trade, whereas others, such as the fortress at Askut, were used as supply depots for campaigns into Upper (southern) Nubia.

Senusret III managed to expand Egypt's borders further south than any ruler before him, of which he was proud. A stele at Semna with a duplicate at Uronarti records:

I have made my boundary further south than my fathers,
I have added to what was bequeathed me.
I am a king who speaks and acts,
What my heart plans is done by my arm.
One who attacks to conquer, who is swift to succeed,
In whose heart a plan does not slumber.
Considerate to clients, steady in mercy,
Merciless to the foe who attacks him.
One who attacks him who would attack,
Who stops when one stops,
Who replies to a matter as befits it.
To stop when attacked is to make bold the foe's heart,
Attack is valor, retreat is cowardice,
A coward is he who is driven from his border.

Since the Nubian listens to the word of mouth,
To answer him is to make him retreat.
Attack him, he will turn his back,
Retreat, he will start attacking.
They are not people one respects,
They are wretches, craven-hearted.
My majesty has seen it, it is not an untruth.
I have captured their women,
I have carried off their subjects,
Went to their wells, killed their cattle,
Cut down their grain, set fire to it.
As my father lives for me, I speak the truth!
It is no boast that comes from my mouth.

He not only stabilized Egypt's southern border at Semna, his troops regularly penetrated the area beyond and we know of a record recording the height of the inundation as far south as Dal, many miles beyond Semna. This stele continues with an admonishes later kings;

Now as for every son of mine who shall maintain this boundary, which My Majesty has made, he is my son, he is born of My Majesty, the likeness of a son who is the champion of his father, who maintains the boundary of him that begat him. Now, as for him who shall relax it, and shall not fight for it; he is not my son, he is not born to me.

His son, Amenemhet III heeded this warning, and interestingly, Senusret III was later deified in Nubia as a god.



Senusret III Stele from Aswan

However, we also know that, in what we believe to be his final campaign in Nubia in year 19 of his reign, his efforts were less successful. Apparently, due to a drop in the Nile's water level, his forces had to make a retreat to avoid being trapped.

Most of Senusret III's military attention was directed towards Nubia, but he is also noted for a campaign in Syria against the Mentjui, where rather than a goal of expansion, he seems to have been after retribution and plunder. We owe this information to a stele belonging to an individual named Sobekkhu, who apparently also participated in the Nubian campaigns. The king apparently led this campaign himself, capturing the town of Sekmem, which may have been Shechem in the Mount Ephraim region.

It was probably during Senusret III's reign that we also find the "Execration Texts" These were inscriptions found in Nubia and Egypt, usually inscribed either on magical figurines or on pottery. The inscriptions were usually a list of enemies of Egypt. These objects were often ritualistically smashed, and the shards placed under the foundations of new building, thus "smothered", or nailed at the edge of the area they were meant to protect.

The plunder from the Nubian and Syrian campaigns was mostly directed towards the temples in Egypt, and their renewal. For example, at Abydos, an inscription by a local official named Ikhnofret states that the king commissioned him to refurbish Osiris's barge, shrine and chapels with gold, electrum, lapis lazuli, malachite and other costly stones.

He also adorned the temple of Mentuhotep II at Deir el-Bahari at Luxor with a series of six life size granite standing statues of himself wearing the nemes and headdress. They once lined the lower terrace

Religiously, we are told in a graffiti that, even though his capital, burial ground and other interests were in Northern Egypt, he also helped maintain a large number of priests associated with the cult of Amun in Upper (southern) Egypt at Thebes.

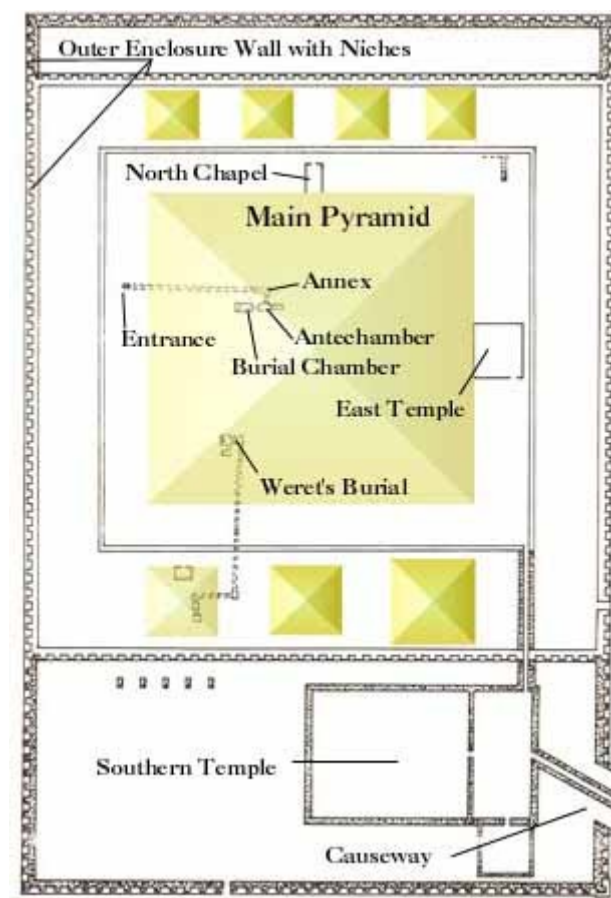
He also had built a large temple to the old Theban war god, Montu, just north of Karnak at Nag-el-Medamoud.

While this temple was refurbished in the New Kingdom and again in the Greek and Roman period, nothing remains of it save two finely carved granite gateways that were discovered in 1920, along with some very splendid statues and a few inscriptions.

Domestically, Senusret III was able to carry on his military campaigns and building projects because he had matters at home largely under control. He divided the country into three administrative divisions (waret), including a North, South and the Head of the South (Elephantine and Lower Nubia), that were each administered by a council (djadjet) of senior staff who in turn reported to a vizier.

This sufficiently weakened the power of local nomarchs (governors) and other high officials who had once again begun to challenge the central government and the monarch. Decentralization due to powerful local officials and nobles had, in the past, created chaos and ultimately led to the dark times of the First Intermediate Period. It would seem that most all of the Middle Kingdom rulers were aware of this threat, and were constantly on guard.

This new administrative scheme apparently also had another effect, in that it promoted the rise of the middle class, many of whom were incorporated into the administration, and were no longer under the influence and control of the local nobles.



Senusret III had his [pyramid built at Dahshur](#), a mostly Middle Kingdom necropolis. It was the largest of the 12th Dynasty pyramids, but like the others with mudbrick cores, after the casing was removed it deteriorated badly.

In the excavation season of 1894-1895, Jacques de Morgan also found the tombs of Queen Mereret and princess Sit-Hathor near the northern enclosure wall of Senusret III's pyramid complex. Also found with these tombs were some fine jewelry, missed by earlier robbers.

Some Egyptologists doubt that Senusret III was buried in this pyramid. He also had an elaborate tomb and complex built in South Abydos. This huge complex stretches over a kilometer between the edge of the Nile floodplain and the foot of the high desert cliffs that form the western boundary of the valley. This complex consists of an underground tomb which, at least at one time, was considered to be the largest in Egypt - that may have been eclipsed by the discovery of the Tomb of Ramesses II's Sons in the Valley of the Kings.

Other components include a mortuary temple at the edge of the cultivated fields and a town south of the tomb that supported the complex. The name of this funerary complex was 'Enduring are the Places of Khakaure Justified in Abydos'.

Senusret III is further attested by blocks from a doorway found near Qantir and by his rock inscriptions near the island of Sehel south of Aswan that record the reopening of the bypass canal.

Amenemhet III (1860 BC 1814 BC)





TYhe sixth ruler of the 12th Dynasty

Amenemhet III was the son of Senusret III and the last great ruler of the Middle Kingdom. Amenemhet III appears to have shared the throne with his father as co-regent for at least a while before the death of his father. The king's principal wives were buried in his pyramid at Dahshur in their own chambers, a very unusual feature at this time.

The Chief wife was probably Aat. The second queen we are unsure of. We also know of a daughter named Neferuptah and of course his successor who was probably his son, Amenemhet IV. However, Amenemhet IV may have been a grandson, but in any

event, Amenemhet III probably made him a co-regent. It is also possible that the queen who ruled as the last pharaoh of the 12th Dynasty, Sobkhotpe IV was also his daughter.

Every king before him or after him in the 12th Dynasty, with perhaps the exception of the last female ruler, would either be named Amenemhet, as the dynasty's founder was, or Senusret, the first of whom was probably the non royal father of Amenemhet I. This is the king's birth name, meaning 'Amun is at the head'. His throne name was Ny-maat-re, meaning 'Belonging to the Justice of Re'. To the Greeks, he was Ammenemes III. Amenemhet III was the 6th ruler of the 12th Dynasty, and may have reigned for as long as 45 years. He supposedly ruled from 1842 through 1797 BC.

It was a good thing he ruled this long, because his first tomb, his pyramid at Dahshur, started collapsing about the time it was finished. It took about 14 or 15 years to build, and he had to start completely over with a new pyramid near to the Fayoum at Hawara. At Hawara, we believe the complexity and splendor of his mortuary temple made it commonly known as the Labyrinth. Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo and Pliny all make reference to this structure. According to Diodorus, Daedalus was so impressed by the temple that he built his own labyrinth for Minos in Crete based on Amenemhet III's temple.

In some respects, the disaster associated with his first pyramid worked in this king's favor, for it provided him the opportunity to build his tomb closer to the region that he seemed to flourish with attention. Because of his interest in the agricultural economics of the Fayoum, his reign became perhaps the apex of the Middle Kingdom and he reciprocated with an interest in its needs, as well as founding temples and building statues.

Building activity in the Fayoum, besides his pyramid, included the Temple of Sobek, the principle local deity, in the city the Greeks called Crocidopolis. In the Fayoum, Sobek was closely related to a more national god, the falcon, Horus the Elder. He also built a chapel dedicated to Renenutet the goddess of the harvest, at Medinet Maadi.

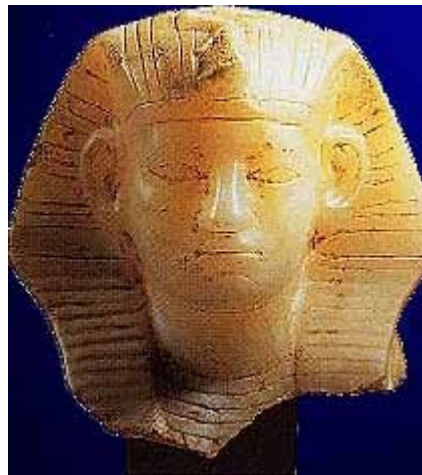
He participated in agricultural projects in the Fayoum as well. He built a barrage to regulate the flow of water into the large lake, Birket Qarun from the Bahr Yousef canal. This reclaimed a large fertile area, perhaps as much as 17,000 acres, that was further protected by an earthen embankment. To celebrate this achievement, he erected two colossal statues of himself at Biyahmu. The statues stand upon very impressive bases, and overlook the lake. He was so much connected to the Fayoum that during the Greco-Roman era, during which time there was a revival of the area, he was probably worshipped as a god under the name Lamares.

Probably because of the connecting mortuary temple, his pyramid complex at Hawara was world renown. The mortuary temple was complex with many columned courtyards, chambers and passages.

Outside of the Fayoum he built a temple of Quban in Nubia and expanded the temple of Ptah at Memphis.

Considering his building projects, it is not surprising that Amenemhet III was very active in various quarries. He was especially interested in the turquoise mines in Sinai such as those at Serabit el-Khadem.

He probably at least extensively rebuilt and enlarged the Temple dedicated to Hathor and other gods at Serabit el-Khadem. In fact, there were some 49 rock inscriptions there, as well as ten more at Wadi Maghara and Wadi Nasb in the Sinai that record almost continuous mining operations between years two and forty-five of his reign. Yet within Egypt, it is curious that we actually have very few inscriptions from Amenemhet III. But he was also active at Wadi Hammamat, where alabaster is mined, in the diorite quarries of Nubia, at Tura for its fine white limestone, and other mining sites.



What we do not see during Amenemhet III's time is a lot of military action, other than perhaps strengthening the defenses at Semna. The military activities of his predecessors allowed him a peaceful reign upon which to build, as well as to exploit the mineral wealth of the quarries. He did build, politically, reorganizing the domestic administration. He continued to reform the national administration as did his father. It was probably his father that divided the country into three administrative regions, controlled by departments based at the capital. This federal bureaucracy oversaw the activities of local officials, who no longer possessed any extensive power. Amenemhet III continued to refine this new administration.

Amenemhet III was also able to continue with good foreign relations also without much military action. It is said that he was honored and respected from Kerma to Byblos, and during his reign many eastern workers, including peasants, soldiers and craftsmen, came to Egypt.

However, the extensive building works, together with possibly a series of low Nile floods, may have exhausted the economy by the end of his reign. Ironically, all of these foreign workers, many employed for building activities, may have also encouraged the Hyksos to settle in the Delta, thus leading eventually to the collapse of native Egyptian rule. Upon the king's death, he was buried in his second pyramid at Hawara.

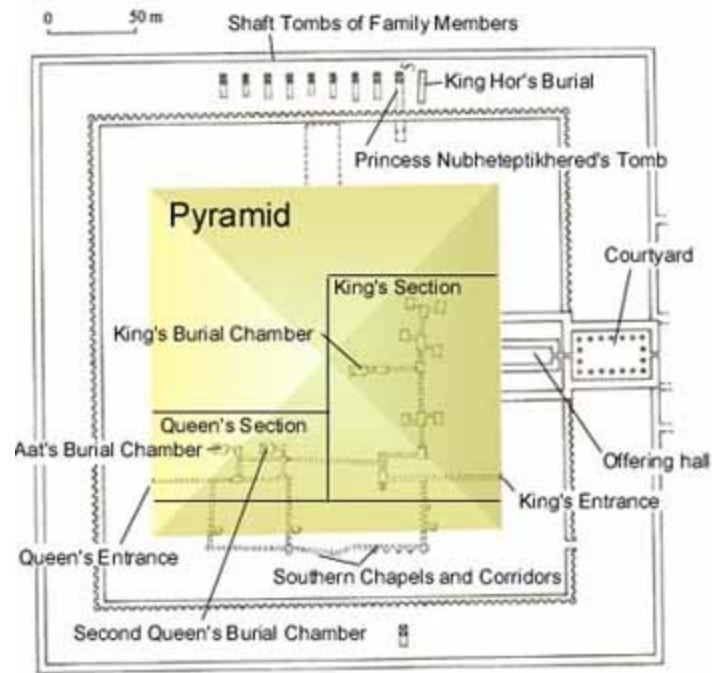
Amenemhet III is also attested to by an unusual set of statues probably of Amenemhet III and Senusret III that shows the two in archaic priestly dress and offering fish, lotus flowers and geese. These statues are very naturalistic, but show the king in the guise of a Nile god. There was also a set of sphinxes that were once thought to have been attributable to the later Hyksos rulers, but are now believed to have been built on the orders of Amenemhet III. Originally all these statues were discovered reused in the Third Intermediate Period temples at Tanis. We also know of an inscription by the king at Koptos(Coptos).



Amenemhet III attempted to build his first pyramid at Dahshur, but it turned out to be a disaster as it was built on unstable subsoil. Today the pyramid named 'Amenemhet is Mighty' is a sad dark ruin on the Dahshur field, aptly sometimes called the Black Pyramid.

Even though it took 15 years to build, rather than being buried in this pyramid, Amenemhet III chose to build a second pyramid at Hawara, closer to his beloved Fayoum.





[The Pyramid of Amenemhet III](#)

[The White Pyramid](#)

Amenemhet IV - Maakherure - (1814 BC - 1806 BC)



Because of the long reign of Amenemhat III, it is possible that Amenemhat IV was the grandson of his predecessor rather than his son. It should be noted, however, that the fact that there is no trace of Amenemhat III ever having had a son, does not rule out that Amenemhat IV may have been the son of his predecessor.

It is generally believed that he was married to Nefrusobek, who is assumed to have been a daughter of Amenemhat III. If both assumptions are correct, it is more likely that Amenemhat IV may still have been a son of his predecessor.

In any case, the name of the mother of Amenemhat IV is not known, which might perhaps mean that she was already deceased when he got to the throne. According to Manetho, this king ruled for only 8 years, a number that is confirmed by the 9 years, 3 months and 27 days credited to him in the Turin Kinglist. This short reign is confirmed by the relatively few sources that have survived from his reign. It might also indicate that Amenemhat IV was already an elderly man when he came to power.

He shared the first year of his reign in co-regency with Amenemhat III. Amenemhat IV completed several temples that were started during by Amenemhat III. Inscriptions in Nubia also show that he still controlled the territory that was conquered during the reign of Sesostri III.

He appears to have died without heir and was succeeded by Nefrusobek. He was probably buried in his pyramid in Masghuna.

Nefrusobek - Sobekkare - (1806 BC - 1802 BC)



The last ruler of the 12th Dynasty, Nefrusobek is generally believed to have been a daughter of Amenemhat III and the widow of Amenemhat IV. According to Manetho, she may have been a sister of Amenemhat IV.

Her marriage to Amenemhat IV seems to have left them with no male heir, so Nefrusobek became one of the few women to have become king in Ancient Egypt.

The 4 years credited to her by Manetho are confirmed by the 3 years, 10 months and 24 days that have been recorded in the Turin Kinglist. The fact that she is listed in the Turin Kinglist is, in itself, interesting because it shows that she was not considered as a mere regent or as an usurper.

Nefrusobek is the first known female king to have had a full royal titulary. Her titulary still shows the typical ending for feminine words, thus combining the traditionally male titles with the reality that Nefrusobek was a woman.

A graffito in the Nubian fortress of Kumma indicates that like her predecessor, Nefrusobek was still in charge of the Nubian territory that had been conquered by Sesostri III. She also contributed to the Labyrinth of Amenemhat III and probably granted her ancestor divine status in the Fayum.

Several pieces of statues of Nefrusobek have been found. Like her titulary, her statues too combine the traditional aspects of kingdom with the reality that this king was female. Thus we find a headless statue of Nefrusobek in the Louvre Museum that still has a part of the nemes head-cloth showing on her shoulders, while she is still wearing a typically female dress.

Her tomb has not yet been identified, although it has sometimes been assumed that she was buried in a pyramid in Mashguna.

Dynasties 13-17

There were more than 70 kings in this dynasty. They were not all related to each other. Some of them may only have ruled for a couple of months, or less. Some may also have ruled at the same time as others.

Wegaf 1783-1779
Amenemhat-senebef
Sekhemre-khutawi
Amenemhat V
Sehetepibre I
Iufni
Amenemhat VI
Semenkare
Sehetepibre II
Sewadjkare
Nedjemibre
Sobekhotep I
Reniseneb
Hor I
Amenemhat VII
Sobekhotep II
Khendjer
Imira-mesha
Antef IV
Seth
Sobekhotep III

Neferhotep I 1696 - 1686

Neferhotep I was the 22nd king of the 13th Dynasty. He ruled Egypt from 1696 till 1686 BC. He was the son of a temple priest in Abydos. His father's position helped him to gain the royal image as the king because he did not have any royal blood in his family. Neferhotep is inscribed on some stones discovered near Byblos. Also, they found other stones in Aswan that were carved with texts which documents all his reign. It seems that all his power reached the Delta in the north and the Nubian Nome in the south.

Sihathor 1685 - 1685

Sobekhotep IV 1685 - 1678

Sobekhotep V 1678 - 1674

Iaib 1674 - 1664

Ay 1664 - 1641

Ay was the 27th king of the 13th Dynasty. He ruled Egypt from 1664 till 1641 BC. The king did not have any royal blood. He was from Avaris, a city located in Eastern Delta that was heavily populated with Heksus. The Heksus are the Asiatics who controlled Northern Egypt till 1500 BC. Ay built his pyramid near Avaris but only ruins remain from his temple.

Ini I

Sewadjtu

Ined

Hori

Sobekhotep VI

Dedumes I

Ibi II

Hor II

Senebmiu

Sekhanre I

Merkheperre

Merikare

DYNASTY 14

Nehesi

Khatire

Nebfaure

Sehabre

Meridjefare

Sewadjkare

Heribre
Sankhibre
Kanefertemre
Neferibre
Ankhkare

DYNASTY 15

Salitis - Salitis was the 1st king of the 15th Dynasty. Northern Egypt was under Heksus rulers throughout the Dynasty. The Heksus are the Asiatics that invaded through Sinai and settled in the Delta. The Heksus controlled all the Nile Delta and Northern Egypt. By time, they got more powerful and set their own Dynasties (from the 14th till the end of the 16th Dynasty). Some scholars mention Salitis's name as "Sultan". This is an Arabic translation of the phrase 'powerful king' because the king was considered to be the founder of the Great Heksus Dynasty. Salitis captured Memphis and placed himself in higher rank than any of the royal families in the Capitol.

Bnon

Apachnan (Khian) -

Apachnan was the third king of the 15th Dynasty. He was considered one of the "Great Heksus". Apachnan's power reached beyond his kingdom in Northern Egypt. Archeologists found some scarabs and seals bearing his name in Northern and Southern Egypt and some Mediterranean islands such as Crete.

Apophis (Auserre Apepi)

Khamudi -

Khamudi was the last king of the 15th Dynasty and was the last king of the "Great Heksus". The king was listed in the Turin Canon. Khamudi's Obelisk was discovered near the ancient city of Avaris. The king was responsible for negotiation of the Hiksus army's withdrawal from Avaris and most of the Delta. Khamudi was pressured to withdraw due to the successful campaign of Ahmose I's army on his capitol. However, the southern Pharaohs did not keep their agreement and pushed the Heksus out of Egypt and raided their cities in the Middle East for several years by the Theben kings of the 18th Dynasty.

DYNASTY 16

Anat-Her
User-anat
Semqen
Zaket
Wasa
Qar
Pepi III
Bebankh
Nebmaatre
Nikare II
Aahotepre
Aaneterire
Nubankhre
Nubuserre
Khauserre
Khamure
Jacob-Baal
Yakbam
Yoam
Amu

DYNASTY 17

Antef V
Rahotep
Sobekemzaf I
Djehuti
Mentuhotep VII
Nebirau I
Nebirau II Semenre
Suserenre
Sobekemzaf II
Antef VI
Antef VII

Tao I (Senakhtenre) - The fourteenth king of the Theban Dynasty, ruling Egypt contemporaneously with the Hyksos 15th and 16th Dynasties, was the son of Tao I and Queen Tetisheri. When Tao received word from Apophis, ruler of the Hyksos capital in Avaris, that the hippopotami in the sacred pool at Thebes kept him awake with their snoring, Tao regarded it as an insult. The hippopotami were 400 miles from Apophis sleeping chambers! Tao declared war but was soon killed. His mummy shows evidence of blows by battle-axes, spears and lances. His ribs, vertebrae and

skull were fractured. His heir, Kamose, assumed the throne and the war, and was victorious.

Tao II (Sekenenre) - The fourteenth king of the Theban Dynasty, ruling Egypt contemporaneously with the Hyksos 15th and 16th Dynasties, was the son of Tao I and Queen Tetisheri. When Tao received word from Apophis, ruler of the Hyksos capital in Avaris, that the hippopotami in the sacred pool at Thebes kept him awake with their snoring, Tao regarded it as an insult. The hippopotami were 400 miles from Apophis sleeping chambers! Tao declared war but was soon killed. His mummy shows evidence of blows by battle-axes, spears and lances. His ribs, vertebrae and skull were fractured. His heir, Kamose, assumed the throne and the war, and was victorious.

Kamose (Wadjkheperre) - The 15th king of the 17th Dynasty was the son of Sekenenretao and Queen Ahhotep and was the brother of Ahmose I. Kamose's father had been at war with the Hyksos. When Sekenenretao died suddenly, Kamose assumed the throne and the war. Kamose went into war with horse and chariot. His chariots were lighter and more maneuverable than in previous eras. He also had the advantage by having the Medjay as allies. These Nubian forces were ferocious hand to hand combatants that fought in the front lines. Kamose overcame the enemy at Nefrusy and moved into the oasis of Baharia. He then sailed up and down the Nile in search of traitors. When Kamose died, either of natural causes or of battle wounds, without an heir, his brother, Ahmose I took the throne. Kamose was the last king of the 17th Dynasty. Ahmose I was to begin the New Kingdom.

With the decline of the 13th Dynasty, Egypt lost its military power as well. The military leaders and soldiers stationed in Nubia became more and more independent. Some of them may even have permanently settled in Nubia. The fortresses built along the Eastern border were either abandoned, or control on who passed the borders was not as strict as it used to be. Palestinian nomads had free entrance into a country which they considered a country of wealth and abundance.

Most of these Palestinians settled and became traders, farmers or craftsmen, but at least one of them, Khendjer, became a king. By the end of the 13th Dynasty, the Eastern Delta was populated with mostly Asians. During the early 2nd Intermediate Period, a group of Asians, known as the Hyksos, established their own dynasties in Egypt.

Little is known about their origins, or about the way they gained control over large parts of Egypt. It is commonly assumed that they invaded Egypt and overtook it by force. This theory may be supported by the name the Egyptians themselves gave to the Hyksos: "rulers of the foreign countries", which may indicate that the Hyksos ruled outside Egypt before invading it. The weakness of the Egyptians at the beginning of the 2nd Intermediate Period may have invited a military invasion.

On the other hand, there is no real proof of military conflicts between the Egyptians and the Hyksos at the end of the Middle Kingdom. It is also possible that the Asian settlers who had been coming to Egypt for some generations had become so powerful, that they were able to gain political control and establish their own dynasties, without a military show of force. The fact that some of them used Egyptian names and that they did not try to integrate their own Asian heritage into the Egyptian culture, may indeed lead to suppose that the Hyksos had been living long enough in Egypt before they seized power to have adapted themselves to the Egyptian culture.

By whatever means the Hyksos came into power in Egypt, they were largely accepted throughout the country as the ruling dynasty. They did, however, tolerate other dynasties to coexist with their own. The 15th Dynasty was not the only dynasty of Hyksos: there was also the less important 16th Dynasty, about which little is known. It is possible that there were still some kings of the 13th Dynasty who ruled a part of the country. The kings of the 14th Dynasty -if there ever was a 14th Dynasty- are said to have ruled the Western part of the Delta. And in Thebes ruled an Egyptian house: the 17th Dynasty.

Although the time the Hyksos ruled Egypt has often been depicted as a time of chaos and misery (especially by later generations of Egyptians), it was also a time of technological advance. Before the Hyksos, Egypt has stayed largely ignorant of the advances made in the rest of the Ancient Near East.

Copper and bronze were introduced into Egypt during this period, together with many new tools and, most importantly, weapons. The rule of the Hyksos during the 2nd Intermediate Period would prepare the Egyptian for the adventure of the New Kingdom.

Around 1550, the 17th Dynasty first started opposing the dominion of the Hyksos kings. A New Kingdom tale teaches us how the Hyksos king Apophis sent a letter to the Theban king Seqenenre, complaining that the noise made by Seqenenre's hippopotamuses prevented him from sleeping. Seqenenre, of course, would not take such an insult, but unfortunately, this is where the story breaks of. That this story may have been based on fact, is suggested by the mummy of Seqenenre, which shows that he died a violent death, perhaps on the battlefield.

The first historically recorded traces of a war against the Hyksos are dated to the reign of Seqenenre's son, Kamose.

Two stelae commemorate Kamose's struggle against the Hyksos and their vassals. Against the advice of his council, Kamose started or continued the war, punishing all those who had collaborated with the foreigners. He almost succeeded in conquering Avaris, the capital of the Hyksos in the Delta, but he too may have fallen on the battlefield.

It would be Kamose's younger brother and successor, Ahmose, who would finally succeed in overthrowing the Hyksos. With his reign, a new period of prosperity and wealth would begin: the New Kingdom.

The New Kingdom - Dynasty 18 (1540-1070)

The New Kingdom is the period in Egyptian history between the 16th century BCE and the 11th century BCE, covering the Eighteenth, Nineteenth, and Twentieth Dynasties of Egypt. It followed the Middle Kingdom, and was succeeded by the Third Intermediate Period.

Egypt's 18th Dynasty that established the New Kingdom is, to most people interested in Egypt, a *dynasty of stars*. It is the dynasty of Tutankhamun who was a fairly minor king, but perhaps the best known of any of the pharaohs. It was also the dynasty of the well known Akhenaten, and of Queen Hatshepsut.

Possibly as a result of the foreign rule of the Hyksos during the Second Intermediate Period, the New Kingdom saw Egypt attempt to create a buffer between the Levant and Egypt. The New Kingdom saw Egypt attain its greatest territorial extent. It expanded far south into Nubia and held wide territories in the Near East. Egyptian armies fought Hittite armies for control of modern-day Syria.

The Eighteenth Dynasty contained some of Egypt's most famous Pharaoh's including Hapshepsut and Thothmosis III, Egypt's answer to Napoleon. One of the best-known New Kingdom pharaohs was Amenhotep IV, who changed his name to Akhenaten in honor of the Aten and whose exclusive worship of the Aten is often interpreted as history's first instance of monotheism (and was argued in Sigmund Freud's *Moses and Monotheism* to have been the ultimate origin of Jewish monotheism).

Akhenaten's religious fervor is cited as the reason why he was subsequently written out of Egyptian history. Under his reign, in the 14th century BCE, Egyptian art flourished and attained an unprecedented level of realism.

Another celebrated pharaoh was Ramesses II ("the Great"), who sought to recover territories in Palestine, Lebanon and Syria that had been held by Eighteenth-Dynasty Egypt. His campaigns of reconquest culminated in the Battle of Kadesh, where he led Egyptian armies against those of the Hittite king Muwatalli II and was caught in history's first recorded military ambush. Ramesses II was famed for the huge number of children he sired by his various wives and concubines; the tomb he built for his sons, many of whom he outlived, in the Valley of the Kings has proven to be the largest funerary complex in Egypt. Still greater military ability, if less self-promotion, was shown by Ramesses III.

Two other very important pharaohs were Queen Hatshepsut and Thutmose III. Queen Hatshepsut concentrated on expanding Egypt's external trade, sending a commercial expedition to the land of Punt. Thutmose III ("the Napoleon of Egypt") expanded Egypt's army and wielded it with great success.

Ahmose I, Founder of the 18th Dynasty



Ahmose I, is less well known to the general public, but unquestionably of major importance to Egyptian history. He reigned between approximately 1550 BC-1525 BC.

During his reign Egypt was finally and completely liberated from the Hyksos. Examination of his well preserved mummy suggest he was about 35 when he died.

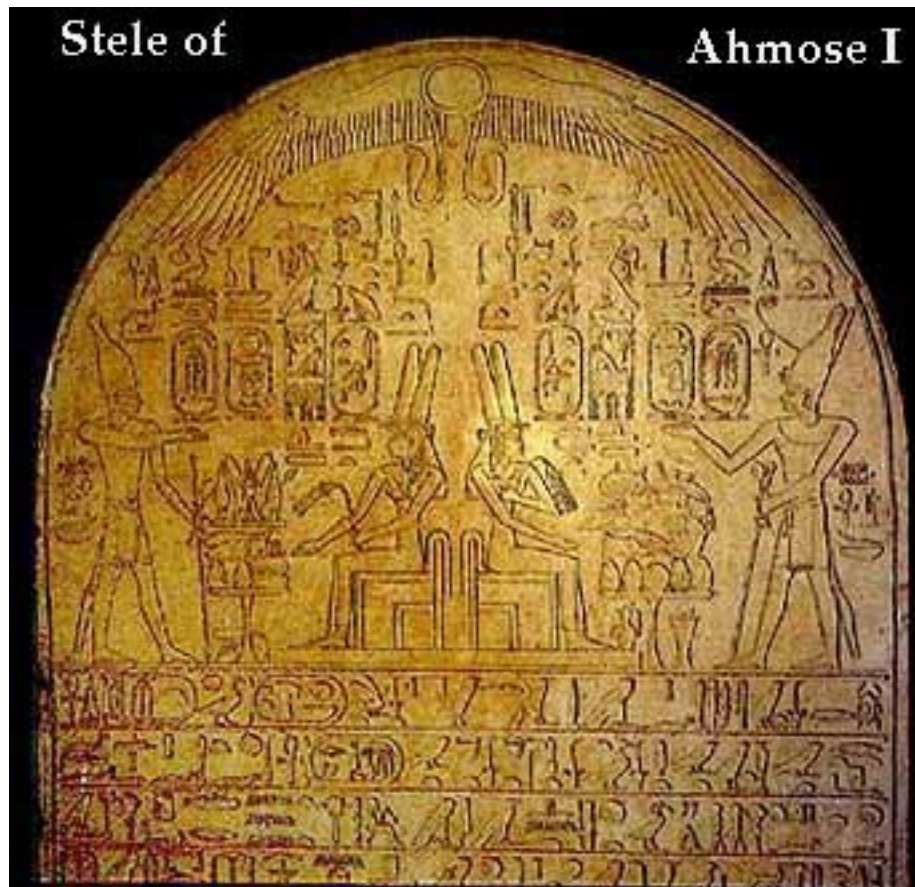
Ahmose I (Amosis to the Greeks) was given the birth name Ah-mose (The Moon is Born).

His thrown name was Neb-pehty-re (The Lord of Strength is Re). He was probably a boy when he assumed the thrown, having lost his father Seqenenre Taa II, the last king of the 17th dynasty, and his brother Kahmose within three years of each other. He was 10 years old when he assumed the throne.

His mother was Queen Ashotep, a powerful woman who was perhaps his co-regent during his early years.

Egyptologists believe that during his very early reign, little was probably accomplished and perhaps the Hyksos may have even gained some ground, recapturing Heliopolis. However, by the end of his first decade in power, we know from an autobiography of Ahmose, son of Ibana, a naval officer from El-Kab, that he laid siege on Avaris (The tomb of Ahmose Pennekheb, another soldier also records the campaigns).

This was a long battle interrupted by the need to put down insurrections in already liberated territories, but appears to have been successful sometime between his 12th and 15th year as ruler. Afterwards, he attacked the southwest Palestinian fortress of Sharuhen in a six year siege that would finally put an end to Hyksos control of Egypt.



Next, he turned his attention to Nubia (Kush) and, while Kamose (his predecessor) may have gained some ground prior to his death, Ahmose I pushed the boundaries south to the Second Cataract.

Here, he established a new civil administration at Buhen probably initially headed by a Viceroy named Djehuty. Apparently, while Ahmose I was in Nubia, former Hyksos allies again attempted a few uprising in the north led by an arch enemy of Kamose named Teti-en.

In this instance, Ahmose I's mother, Ahhotpe, was probably responsible for putting down the rebellion and for this she was awarded the gold flies, an award for valor that was found on her mummy in her intact tomb at Thebes.

After Ahmose I's campaigns in Nubia, he once again returned to Palestine during his 22nd year in power and may have fought his way as far as the Euphrates, according to information on a stela of Tuthmosis I.

Amosis married his sister, Ahmose-Nefertiri, and had a number of children including:

Merytamun - eldest daughter of Ahmose-Nefertari (died young)

Tair - daughter of Kasmut

Satamun - 2nd daughter of Ahmose-Nefertari (died infant)

Sapair - eldest son of Ahmose-Nefertari (died young)

Saamen - 2nd son of Ahmose-Nefertari (died infant)

Aahotep - 3rd daughter of Ahmose-Nefertari (Queen)

Amenhotep I - 3rd son of Ahmose-Nefertari (King)

Satkames - 4th daughter of Ahmose-Nefertari (died aged ~30)

Henttameh- daughter of Thenthapi

Ahmose - daughter

We also know from Ahmose, son of Ibana that he supported his reign and rewarded local princes who had supported the Theban cause during the Second Intermediate Period by gifts of land (as recorded in Ahmose, son of Ibana's tomb at el-Kab).

We also know that he initiated some temple building projects, notably at Abydos. Though we know he reopened the Tura limestone quarries, little survives of his construction apart from a few additions to the temples of Amun and Montu at Karnak.

A recent Dutch-Egyptian team of archaeologists believe they may have unearthed the remains of Ahmose's palace in the Al-Dabaa area in the Sharqiya Governorate of Egypt, a location that was probably the ancient Hyksos capital.

Pyramid of Ahmose I



He was buried in the Dra Abu el-Naga area, but his tomb has yet to be found.

His actual mummy was found in the Deir el-Bahari cache. He did have a cenotaph at South Abydos, consisting of a cliff temple and a pyramid and temple on the edge of the Nile valley.

The pyramid which measures about 70 meters square is the last known royal example built in Egypt. Some battle scene decorations within the pyramid may have depicted his wars with the Hyksos. In these scenes are some of the earliest representation of horses in Egypt.

Amenhotep I - 1540 - 1515



The son of Ahmose and Queen Ahmose Nefretiri, Amenhotep I was the second king of the 18th Dynasty. He may have ascended to the throne at a relatively young age, for an elder brother had been designated as heir only about five years earlier. He may have even served a brief co-regency with his father, however. He evidently carried on many of the practices of his father, and his mother certainly played an important part in his reign, acting as God's Wife of Amun.

Amenhotep I may have been married to his sister, (Ahmose-) Merytamun, though there is apparently little documentation to substantiate this relationship. Better known is this king's daughter, Satamun, who is known both from her coffin found in one of the royal mummy caches, and from two statues at central and southern Karnak.

Because of chronology problems, the king's rule is uncertain. We believe that a heliacal rising of Sirius was seen during his reign, as recorded by the Papyrus Ebers, which states:

Ninth year of the reign of his majesty the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Djeserkare - may he live forever! Festival of the New Year: third month of summer, ninth day - rising of Sirius.

If this is evidence for a helical rising of Sirius, the astronomical calculation gives the date 1537 BC for the rising, and therefore 1546 BC for the beginning of Amenophis' reign, but only if the astronomical observation was made at Memphis. If, however, the observation was made at Thebes - which would logically have been the reference point if it was the capital - twenty years have to be deducted from the figure, giving the date of 1517 BC for the astronomical event and 1526 BC for the coronation of Amenophis I

Most Egyptologists assign Amenhotep I a reign of 25 or fewer years. However, it should be mentioned that on a number of his monuments at the Temple of Karnak are found various Jubilee (Sed-festival) scenes. The Sed-festival was normally celebrated after 30 years of the king's rule, but in this case the structure may have been built in anticipation of the festival.

Amenhotep was this king's birth name, which means 'Amun is Pleased'

He is also known as Amenhotpe I, and Amenophis I by the early Greeks.

His throne name was Djoser-ka-re, or 'Holy is the Soul of Re'.

His Horus name was Ka-Waf-Taw - 'Bull who conquers the land'.

His 'Two Ladies' name was Aa-nerw - 'He who inspires great terror'

Regardless of the ferocity of his name, Amenhotep I seems to have had a fairly peaceful reign. He may have faced a Libyan uprising his first year as king, but if he did, Amenhotep I successfully overcame the ancient enemies preventing an invasion in the Delta area. We learn from inscriptions provided by Ahmose son of Ebana, with verification from Ahmose-Pen-Nekhet, that Amenhotep I also led a military expedition into Kush (Nubia) in about year eight of his reign past the second cataract of the Nile, and apparently after his victory, brought captives back to Thebes. However, this appears to have been little more than a skirmish. He appointed a man named Turi as Viceroys of Kush, and established a temple marking Egypt's southern boundary at the Nubian town of Sai.

Because of perhaps a dozen years of peaceful rule during Amenhotep I's reign, his accomplishments included elaborate building work. Amenhotep I repaired and restored many ancient temples along the Nile.

We find evidence of his work in Upper Egyptian sites such as Elephantine, Kom Ombo, Abydos, and the temple of Nekhet, but he seems to have done little building work in Lower Egypt.

Many of the sites where Amenhotep I built had also seen activity by his father, and at Abydos, for example, he erected a chapel commemorating Ahmose I.

But the building projects Amenhotep I is best known for were at the Temple of Karnak in Thebes where he utilized different types of stone including alabaster from Hatnub (and Bosra) and sandstone from the quarries of Gebel el-Silsila.

Amenhotep I was responsible for a large, limestone gateway at Karnak that has now been reconstructed. It was decorated with Jubilee festival decorations. The gate may have at one time been the main south entrance that was later replaced by the Seventh Pylon. He also had a bark shrine built for the god Amun that was probably erected in the west front court of the temple.

Later, Amenhotep III would use some of his predecessor's work at Karnak as fill for his Third Pylon, including a sacred bark chapel of the finest alabaster and a limestone copy of the White Chapel of Senusret I.

Many of Amenhotep I's relief carvings on the limestone monuments at Karnak are so much of a conscious emulation of Senusret I's artists that it has been difficult for archaeologists to determine to whom they should be assigned.

Apparently, his building works were caused him to also restore the mines at Serabit el-Khadim in the Sinai where he also expanded the Middle Kingdom temple of Hathor.

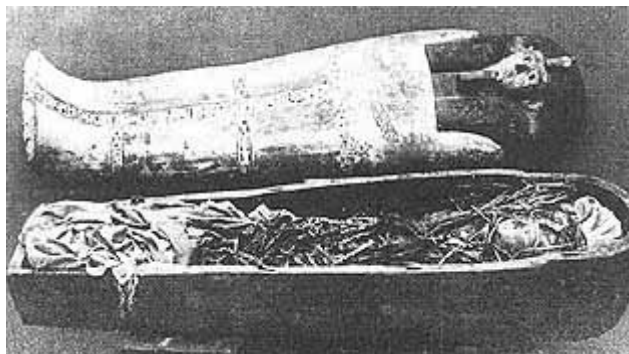
It would seem that by the end of Amenhotep I's reign, the main characteristics of the 18th Dynasty had been established, including a clear devotion to the cult of Amun at Karnak, its successive military conquests in Nubia and its closed royal family with a developing administrative organization drawn from powerful families and collateral relatives.

Amenhotep I was given the rare honor of being declared a titular god upon his death by the priests. He was regarded as the patron god of the Theban necropolis, alongside his mother, Ahmose Nefretiri, who's posthumous renown probably exceeded that of her son. In fact, her name appears in the litany of Amenhotep I's own cult.

Amenhotep I and his mother were especially worshipped at Deir el-Medina on the west bank at Thebes, where the craftsmen and who build and decorated the royal tombs lived. This community was probably either established in his or his father's reign.

Peret, the third month in ancient Egypt, was devoted to and named after Amenhotep I, and several rituals dramatizing his death, burial and resurrection took place at Deir el-Medina during the month of Peret. However, Amenhotep I became a fairly major deity with a number of festivals throughout the year.

The king and his mother's cult remained strong, particularly at Deir el-Medina, throughout the New Kingdom. However, most houses during the Ramessid era contained, in their front rooms, a scene honoring the two. They were usually depicted with black or blue skin, the colors of resurrection, and so were associated with that religious element.



He was probably the first pharaoh to build his tomb some distance from his mortuary temple, a practice that would be emulated by his successors.

While the mortuary temple itself has been located, his tomb remains a mystery. Some Egyptologists believe it to be an uninscribed tomb at Dra Abu el-Naga, outside of the Valley of the Kings, while others believe it might be KV 39 within the Valley proper.

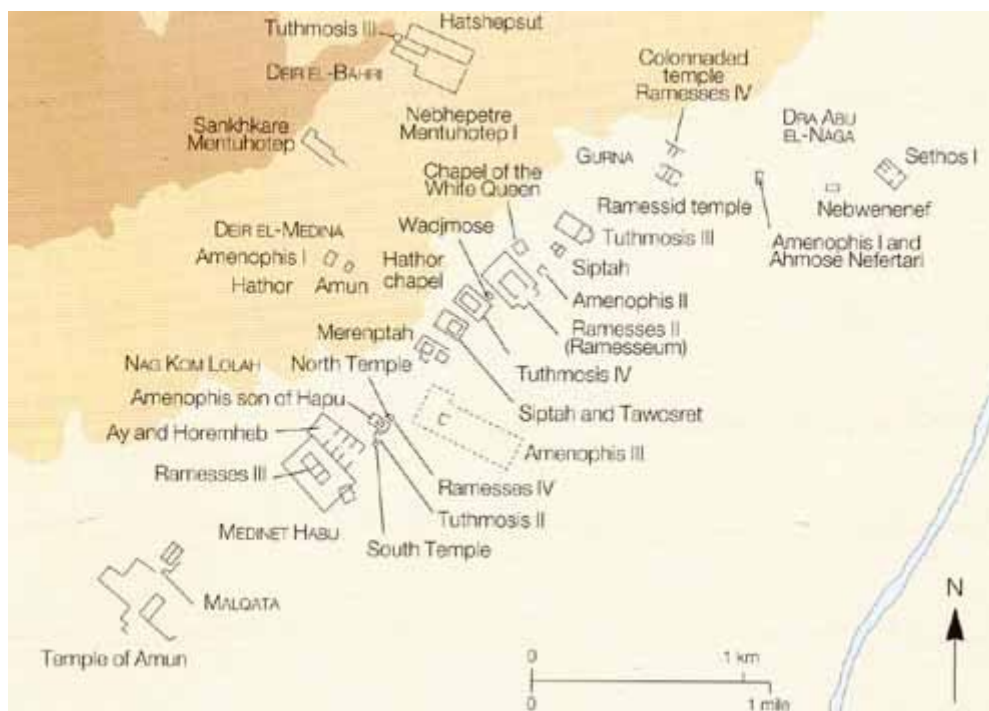
While we have not established its location, an inspection report on the tomb in year 16 of Ramesses IX's rule reported the tomb to be intact at that time. His mummy, along with his father's and a number of others, was found in excellent condition in the royal mummy cache of 1881.

Some information appears to indicate that Amenhotep I's son died in infancy, while other resources tell us he died childless.

At any rate, his military commander, Tuthmoses (I), who was married to the king's sister, princess Ahmose, assumed the throne upon Amenhotep I's death.

There is even a possibility that Tuthmosis I was a grandson of Ahmose, the father of Amenhotep I. He may have even served as a co-regent prior to Amenhotep I's death.

It should be noted that Papyrus Ebers, which dates from Amenhotep I's rule and is now in the Leipzig Museum, is one of our main sources of evidence on ancient Egyptian medicine. Also, the existence of a festival calendar recorded on this papyrus, along with other evidence suggesting an increased interest in astronomical observations, suggest that Amenhotep I may possibly have wished to rework earlier calendars.



THE NEW KINGDOM - DYNASTY 18 (1540-1070)

Tuthmosis I (1494 - 1482)



Third King of Egypt's 18th Dynasty was a commoner by birth and a military man by training. We do not know his father's name, but his mother was Semiseneb, a rather common name during the Second Intermediate Period and the early 18th Dynasty. He had married Ahmose, who may have been a sister of Amenhotep I and daughter of Ahmose I and Queen Ahmose Nefertari (who still held the title, 'God's Wife of Amun' during her grandson's rule) and thus legitimized his rule.

However, others have suggested that Ahmose was in fact Tuthmosis I's own sister. He may have also served as a co-regent under Amenhotep I, and was most certainly an important military commander under his predecessor.

His birth name we are told was Tuthmosis, meaning "Born of the god Thoth", though this is a Greek version.

His actual Egyptian name was Djehutymes I, but he is also sometimes referred to as Thutmose I, or Thutmosis I.

His throne name was A-Kheper-ka-re (Aakheperkara).

He gained the throne at a fairly late age, and may have ruled for about six years.

The *Oxford History of Ancient Egypt* gives his reign lasting from 1504-1492 BC, while Peter Clayton indicates 1524-1518 and *Monarchs of the Nile* as 1503-1491.

Nevertheless, he staged a series of brilliant military campaigns that were to establish Egypt's 18th Dynasty. So effective were these efforts that we believe he must have started preparations for the military operations during the last years of Amenhotep I's rule.

Ahmose son of Ebana, an admiral during Tuthmosis I's reign, tells us that a campaign into Nubia where he penetrated beyond the Third Cataract was highly successful. Tuthmosis may have defeated the Nubian chief in hand to hand combat and returned to Thebes with the body of the fallen chief hanging on the prow of his ship.

His greatest campaigns were in the Delta and his battles against the Syrians as he finally reached the Euphrates River. This expedition opened new horizons that led later to Egypt's important role in the trade and diplomacy of the Late Bronze Age Near East.

Tuthmosis I brought Egypt a sense of stability and his military campaigns healed the wounds of Thebians.



Tuthmosis I's Abydos Stele

We learn from his Abydosstele of his building works at Thebes. His architect, Ineni, built an extension to the temple of Amun at Karnak, adding pylons (the fourth and fifth), courts, statues and one of Egypt's largest standing Obelisks. To commemorate his victory he built a hypostyle hall made entirely of cedar wood columns..

He also expanded the Treasury begun by his predecessor at the northeast corner of the complex. The Abydos stele also tells us that Tuthmosis I he made contributions to the temple of Osiris, including cult objects and statues.

Further, he apparently did some substantial work at Giza.



His Obelisk at Karnak, with that of Hatshepsut behind

He was responsible for a number of building projects within Egypt proper, where he left indications of structures at Elephantine, Armant, Ombos (near the late 17th to early 18th Dynasty palace center at Deir el-Ballas), el-Hiba, Memphis and probably at Edfu.

However, there are also a number of monuments in Upper and Lower Nubia left by Tuthmosis I and his viceroy, Turi. We believe that there are several structures that may date from his reign near Kenisa at the fourth cataract and at Napata. Traces of ruins also exist at Semna, Buhen, Aniba, Quban and Qasr Ibrim, though most of these were probably small, or additions to earlier buildings. We also find a few votive objects dedicated in his name in the Sinai at the temple of Serabit el-Khadim.

Ahmose bore him two sons named Wadjmose and Amenmose (though their parentage is a bit uncertain), but they apparently preceded their father to the grave. So it was by Mutnofret (Mutnefert), a minor queen who was the sister of his principle wife, Ahmose, that his heir, Tuthmosis II was born.

However, his more famous offspring was Queen Hatshepsut, a daughter by Ahmose who would rule after her husband and brother's death. After the death of Ahmose, he probably even took Hatshepsut as his own wife until his death. Ahmose may have also provided him with another daughter by the name of Nefrubity who is depicted with Tuthmosis I and Ahmose in the temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri.



His mummy discovered in the Deir el Bahri Cache

We think that Tuthmosis I buried in two different tombs in the [Valley of the Kings](#) on the West Bank at Luxor (ancient Thebes).

It appears that he may have originally been buried in KV 20, which may have been intended as a tomb for both him and his daughter, Hatshepsut. It contained two yellow quartzite sarcophagi, one inscribed for him and the other for his daughter, as well as a canopic chest for her.

However, when KV 38 was investigated by Victor Loret in 1899, he found a sarcophagus for the king in that tomb as well.

It is possible that his grandson, Tuthmosis III had his grandfather's body removed from the tomb of his despised stepmother's burial and relocated it to KV 38. However, his remains were found in the cache, with others, at Deir el Bahri.

Tuthmosis II, Pharaoh - 1482-1479 B.C.

Tuthmosis II might never have ruled Egypt but for the early death of Wadjmose and Amenmose, the eldest sons of Tuthmosis I, leaving him as the only heir. He became the fourth ruler of Egypt's 18th Dynasty.

He was apparently the oldest son of Mutnefert, a minor royal queen of Tuthmosis I, who was herself the sister of Tuthmosis I's principal queen, Ahmose.



In order to strengthen his position and legitimize his rule, he was married to Hatshepsut, the oldest daughter of Tuthmosis I and Queen Ahmose. She was very possibly older than Tuthmosis II. During this period, Hatshepsut also carried the title, "God's Wife of Amun", a position she may have had even before the death of Tuthmosis I. Hatshepsut would have been both Tuthmosis II's half sister and cousin. In the light of history she became a much better known pharaoh than her husband.

It is believed that Tuthmosis II had only one son by a harem girl named Isis (or Iset). However, Tuthmosis III would have to wait to rule Egypt until after Hatshepsut's death.

Tuthmosis II must have realized the ambitions of his wife, because he attempted to foster the ascent of his son to the throne by naming his son as his successor before he died. But upon Tuthmosis II's death, his son was still very young, so Hatshepsut took advantage of the situation by at first naming herself as regent, and then taking on the full regalia of the pharaoh. He may have also had as many as two daughters by Hatshepsut. We are fairly sure one of them was named Neferure and another possible daughter named Neferubity.



The mummy of Tuthmosis II

We know that Tuthmosis II was a physically weak person, and many Egyptologists speculate that even during his rule, Hatshepsut may have been the real power behind the throne.

It is believed that Tuthmosis II (Born of the God Thoth) which was his birth name (called by the Greeks), ruled for about fourteen years before dying in his early thirties. However, recent scholars wish to have his rule shortened to three years. He is also sometimes called Thutmose II, or Thutmosis II and his throne name was A-kheper-en-re., which means "Great is the Form of Re"

The Oxford History of Egypt places his reign from 1492-1479, while the *Chronicle of the Pharaohs* provides dates of 1518 to 1504. Aidan Dodson's *Monarchs of the Nile* gives his reign as 1491-1479 BC.

We know that he sent campaigns to Palestine and Nubia, attested to by a short inscription in the temple at Deir el-Bahari and a rock-cut stele at Sehel south of Aswan. We are told that he had to crush a revolt in Nubia in his first year and that this brought about the demise of the kingdom of Kush at Kerma. Apparently, to punish the Kushites for their rebellion, he had everyone put to death with the exception of a royal son, who was bought back to Egypt as a hostage. We are told that the Palestine campaign was against the Shosu Bedouin in the region of Nahrin. However, the term Shosu may also refer to Nubians, and some Egyptologists believe that this reference really relates to the campaign in Nubia.

We also have evidence of Tuthmosis II's building projects. Traces of a temple built by him have been found just north of the temple of Medinet Habu on the West Bank at Luxor (ancient Thebes).

This small temple, known as Shespet-ankh (Chapel of Life), was finished by his son, Tuthmosis III. He also had built a pylon shaped limestone gateway in front of the Fourth Pylon's forecourt at Karnak which also had to be completed by Tuthmosis III. The material from this gate and another limestone structure were later reused in the building of Karnak's Third Pylon foundation.

However, the gate has since been rebuilt in Karnak's Open Air Museum. Scenes on the gate sometimes depict Tuthmosis II with Hatshepsut, and sometimes Hatshepsut alone. On one side of the gate, Tuthmosis II is shown receiving crowns, while other scenes depict his daughter, Neferure and Hatshepsut receiving life from the gods. We also know of a building project in Nubia at Semna and Kumma, and surviving blocks from his buildings at Elephantine.

A statue of Tuthmosis II was found at Elephantine that was probably commissioned by Hatshepsut.

We have not really identified either a tomb or a completed mortuary complex for Tuthmosis, though his mummy was found in a royal cache of mummies located at Deir el-Bahari.



[Pharaoh Hatshepsut Maatkare](#)

The Queen Who Would Be King - 1473-1458 B.C.



Hatshepsut was an 18th-dynasty pharaoh who was one of the handful of female rulers in Ancient Egypt. Her reign was the longest of all the female pharaohs. Her funerary temple still stands as a tribute to her incredible rise to power.

Tuthmosis III - Born of Thoth - 1504-1450 B.C.

Men-kheper-re - Lasting is the Manifestation of Re



During the rule of Hatshepsut he stayed well in the background, and perhaps even demonstrated some amount of cunning in order to simply keep his life. Because of the prowess he would later demonstrate on the battlefield, we assume he probably spent much of Hatshepsut's rule in a military position. To an extent, they did rule together, he in a foreign military position, and her taking care of the homeland. When Hatshepsut finally died, outliving her powerful ministers, Tuthmosis III was at last able to truly inherit the throne of Egypt, and in doing so, proved to be a very able ruler.

It was not until the last years of his reign that he demonstrated what must have been some anger with his stepmother by destroying as much of her memory as possible. Her images were expunged from monuments throughout Egypt.

This is obvious to most visitors of Egypt because one of the most effected monuments was her temple at Deir el-Bahari. There, Tuthmosis III destroyed her reliefs and smashed numerous statues into a quarry just in front of the temple. He even went so far as to attack the tombs of her courtiers.



Tuthmosis III became a great pharaoh in his own right, and has been referred to as the Napoleon of ancient Egypt (by the Egyptologists, James Henry Breasted). But perhaps his reputation is due to the fact that his battles were recorded in great detail by the archivist, royal scribe and army commander, Thanuny. The battles were recorded on the inside walls surrounding the granite sanctuary at Karnak, and inscriptions on Thanuny's tomb on the west bank state that, "I recorded the victories he won in every land, putting them into writing according to the facts". Referred to as the Annals, the inscriptions were done during Tuthmosis' 42nd year as pharaoh, and describe both the battles and the booty that was taken. These events were recorded at Karnak because Tuthmosis's army marched under the banner of the god, Amun, and Amun's temples and estates would largely be the beneficiary of the spoils of Tuthmosis' wars.

Having close ties with his military, Tuthmosis undoubtedly received sage advice from his commanders. It was probably decided that the Levant offered the greatest potential for glory and wealth if the trade routes dominated by Syrian, Cypriot, Palestinian and Aegean rulers could be taken.

Tuthmosis III fought with considerable nerve and cunning. On one campaign, he marched to Gaza in ten days and from Yehem, planned the battle to take Megiddo which was held by a rebellious prince named Kadesh. There were three possible approaches to Megiddo, two of which were fairly open, straightforward routes while the third was through a narrow pass that soldiers would only be able to march through in single file.

Though he was advised against this dangerous pass by his commanders, Tuthmosis not only took this dangerous route, but actually led the troops through. Whether by luck, or gifted intuition this gamble paid off, for when he emerged from the tight canyon, he saw that his enemies had arranged their armies to defend the easier routes

He emerged between the north and south wings of the enemy's armies, and the next day decisively beat them in battle. It apparently took a long siege (seven months) to take the city of Megiddo, but the rewards were great. The spoils were considerable, and included 894 chariots, including two covered with gold, 200 suits of armor including two of bronze, as well as over 2,000 horses and 25,000 other animals.

Tuthmosis III had marched from Thebes up the Syrian coast fighting decisive battles, capturing three cities, and then returned back to Thebes. Over the next 18 years, his armies would march against Syria every summer and by the end of that period, he established Egyptian dominance over Palestine. At Karnak he records the capture of 350 cities, and in the 42nd year of his rule, Kadesh itself was finally taken.

He also made campaigns into Nubia where he built temples at Amada and Semna and restored Senusret III's old canal in his 50th year of rule so that his armies could easily pass on their return to Egypt.

Queens and Vassals

Tuthmosis' main queen was Hatshepsut-Merytre, who survived him and lived as Queen Mother into the reign of her son. However, he also had several minor queens, some of whom had been acquired due to diplomatic exchanges. We know the names

of three such minor queens, Menhet, Menwi and Merti from the discovery of their tomb west of Deir el-Bahri. He also took a number of foreign princes hostage, who then received training and indoctrination in Egyptian ways. They would later be returned to their homeland as obedient vassals of Egypt.

Building Projects

Tuthmosis is well attested in many parts of Egypt and outside of Egypt. We find blocks deep within Nubia at Gebel Barkal, and also at Sai, Nubia at the third cataract, Uronarti, Buhen, Quban, Faras and Ellesiya, as well as his temples at Amada and Semna. He also built a temple dedicated to the goddess Satet at Elephantine, as well as projects at Kom Ombo, Edfu, ElKab, Tod, Armant, Akhmim, Hermopolis and Heliopolis. From a list of one of Tuthmosis' overseers, we also know of projects at Asyut, Atfish and various locations in the delta.

Tuthmosis III built his own temple near Hatshepsut's on a ledge between her temple and that of Mentuhotep. His small temple was excavated recently by a Polish mission. The excavation revealed stunningly fresh reliefs, perhaps because a rock fall from the cliffs above covered the temple shortly after its completion. Close by, Tuthmosis built a rock cut sanctuary to the goddess Hathor. This monument was accidentally discovered by a Swiss team when a rock fall exposed its opening. Apparently, the shrine was in use up to the Ramesside period, when it was destroyed by an earthquake.



Tuthmosis III's Temple of Hathor

Of the many monuments associated with Tuthmosis III, none fared better than the temple of Karnak. Wall reliefs near the sanctuary record the many gifts of gold jewelry, furniture, rich oils and other gifts offered to the temple, mostly from the spoils of war, by Tuthmosis III. He was responsible for the Sixth and Seventh Pylons at Karnak, as well as considerable reconstruction within the central areas of the temple. He erected two obelisks at the temple, one of which survives at the

Hippodrom at Istanbul. There is also a great, black granite Victory Stele embellishing his military victories.



He also built a new and very unique temple at Karnak that is today referred to as his Festival Hall. The columns are believed to represent the poles of the king's campaign tent.

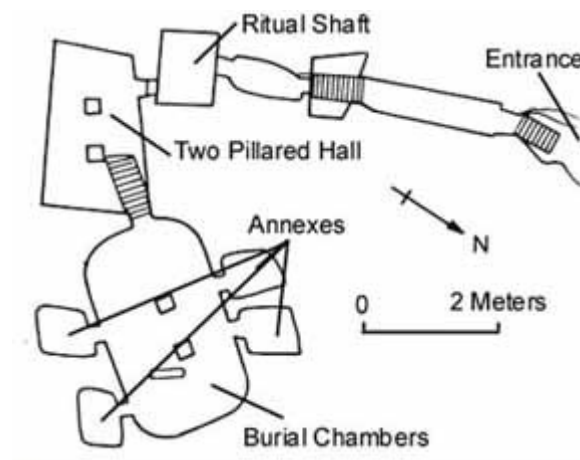


The tomb of Tuthmosis III (KV 34) is said to be one of the most sophisticated tombs in the Valley of the Kings.

Discovered by Victor Loret's workmen in 1898 during this famous Egyptologist's absence, work did not begin on clearing the rubble from the entrance until his return. He then excavated the site meticulously, using 24 square grids and recording the placement of even the smallest of objects.

The tomb itself can be found in a narrow gorge at the bottom of the Valley of the Kings. The entrance is 30 meters above ground level, but of course this did not stop ancient tomb robbers, though Loret did find some funerary furniture that had been left behind.

The orientation of the tomb is such that the entrance lies in the north, while the burial chamber deviates to the east, a tradition originating with the Middle Kingdom Pyramid of Sesostris II.



This complex path symbolized the region of the netherworld. Typically for this period, but a first for the Valley of the King's proper, the tomb begins with a stairway, a corridor, a second stairway and a second corridor before reaching the ritual shaft. The ceiling of the ritual shaft is painted with a blue sky and yellow stars. After the ritual shaft, like most tombs of this period, there is a 90 degree turn into the Vestibule, which is then followed by the burial chamber with its four lateral annexes. While the passages are not decorated, other areas were plastered and painted for the first time.



The vestibule has two pillars, and is decorated with the 741 divinities of the Amduat that generate the daily sun. A flight of stairs leads directly from there to the burial chamber, which is oval and also has two pillars. The oval burial chamber is common also to the tombs of Thutmosis I and Thutmosis II.

The burial chamber is large, and holds a beautiful red quartzite sarcophagus. However, Thutmosis III's mummy was not found here, but rather in tomb DB 320 at Deir el-Bahri (in 1881).

The walls of the burial chamber are designed like a huge ornamental scroll, with the complete text of the Book of Amduat.

The ancient Egyptians called this book the "Book of the Secret Room". Amduat meant "that which there is in the afterlife", and the book is divided into twelve parts, representing the hours of the night.



On the two square pillars of the burial chamber, and for the first time, we find passages from the Litany of Re on seven of the surfaces, and on the eighth a unique scene in which the king is shown being nursed by a divine tree goddess labeled ". It is likely, however, that these pillar decorations were added hastily, after the king's death.

This tomb had been brutally plundered by reckless robbers. They took no care whatsoever to prevent damage, and in some instances demonstrated almost a violent hatred, throwing objects forcefully against the walls, where traces of gold foil may still be seen. The principal item of funerary equipment found in the tomb was the sarcophagus.

Other items included a number of wooden statues of the king and various deities, pieces of wooden model boats, pottery and bones from a baboon and a bull.

However, a foundation deposit was also discovered that contained model tools, plaques and vessels. A number of other items from the tomb were also discovered by Daressy, Carter and John Romer in other areas of the Valley of the Kings. In the rear is a small room with representations of animals and plants bought back from Syria during the 25th year of his reign. For obvious reasons, this room is referred to as the Botanical Garden.

The opulence of his reign is also reflected in the quality tombs built by his high officials. The tomb of his vizier, Rekhmire is notable, with many scenes of daily life, crafts as well as a long inscription concerning the office of vizier. However, the presence of a military elite is also attested by no less than eleven Theban tombs from the reign of Tuthmosis.

He was buried in tomb KV 34 in the Valley of the kings. The tomb was halfway up a cliff face, and after his burial, masons destroyed the stone stairway leading up to it and concealed the tomb's entrance.

However, it would seem that no matter what initiatives pharaohs took to protect their tombs, robbers were sure to find them. Indeed, in 1898 when his tomb was discovered by Victor Loret, all he found was the carved sarcophagus and some remains of smashed furniture and wooden statues. Tuthmosis III, mummy likewise was not in the tomb, for it had been found in 1881 in the great royal cache at Deir el-Bahari. However, the tomb is covered with black and red painted hieratic renditions of the netherworld texts.

Amenhotep II (1494 - 1482 B.C.)



Amenhotep II was the 7th Pharaoh of Egypt's 18th Dynasty.

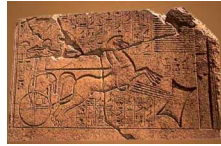
Amenhotep (heqaiunuwas) his birth name, meaning "Amun is Pleased, Ruler of Heliopolis He is sometimes referred to by Amenhotpe II, or the Greek version of his name, Amenophis II. His throne name was A-kheperu-re, meaning "Great are the Manifestations of Re".

He was the son of Tuthmosis III, with whom he may have served a short co-regency of about two years. His mother was probably Merytra, a daughter of Huy, who was a divine adoratrice of Amun and Atum and chief of choristers for Ra. Apparently, she also served as, at least his publicly acknowledge, wife.

Amenhotep II's reign is considered pivotal by many Egyptologists, though it is certainly popularly overshadowed by that of his two predecessors and some of his successors of the 18th Dynasty. He is generally acknowledged to have taken care of his military duties early on, thereafter establishing a peaceful and prosperous reign suitable to fairly extensive expansion of temple monuments.

Notably, Amenhotep II was well known for his athletic abilities as a young man. A number of representations of him depict his participation in successful sporting

pursuits. He lived in the Memphite region where he trained horses in his father's stables, and one of his greatest athletic achievements was accomplished when he shot arrows through a copper plate while driving a chariot with the reins tied about his waist.



This deed was recorded in numerous inscriptions, including a stele at Giza and depictions at Thebes. So famous was the act that it was also miniaturized on scarabs that have been found in the Levant. Sara Morris, a classical art historian, has even suggested that his target shooting success formed the basis hundreds of years later for the episode in the Iliad when Archilles is said to have shot arrows through a series of targets set up in a trench. He was also recorded as having wielded an oar of some 30 ft in length, rowing six times as fast as other crew members, though this may certainly be an exaggeration.

As a king, Amenhotep II's athletic abilities may have served him very well, for within a short period after gaining the throne, his metal would be tested. Various sources disagree on how many military expeditions he made into Syria, and in what year of his reign these occurred. These military actions are recorded on stele erected at Amada, Memphis and Karnak.

Yet it is clear that there had been a revolt in the Syrian region, and possibly even in the ports on the Mediterranean sea. His father was well recognized as a military leader, sometimes referred to as the "Napoleon of ancient Egypt". Therefore it is perhaps not surprising that when a region in Syria known as Tikhsi heard of his father's death, they decided to test the new pharaoh (apparently not an uncommon practice).

Some references refer to his first expedition taking place as early as his 2nd year of rule, though others provide that it was during his 7th. Still other references indicate that he made both of these campaigns. Regardless, he fought his way across the Orontes river and claims to have subdued all before him. One city, Niy, apparently had learnt their lesson under his father, and welcomed Amenhotep II. But at Tikhsi (Takhsy, as mentioned in the Theban tomb of Amenemheb - TT85), he captured seven prizes, returning with them in the autumn. They were hung face down on the prow of his ship on the return journey, and six of them were subsequently hung on the enclosure wall of the Theban temple. The other was taken south into Nubia where his was likewise hung on the walls of Napata, "in order to cause to be seen the victorious might of His Majesty for ever and ever".

According to the Stele recording these events, this first campaign netted booty consisting of 6,800 deben of gold and 500,000 deben of copper (about 1,643 and 120,833 pounds respectively), as well as 550 mariannu captives, 210 horses and 300 chariots.

All sources agree that he once again campaigned in Syria during his ninth year of rule, but only in Palestine as far as the Sea of Galilee.

Yet these stele, erected after year nine of Amenhotep II's rule, that provide us with this information do not bear hostile references to either Mitanni or Nahrin, the general regions of the campaigns. This is probably intentional, because apparently the king had finally made peace with these former foes. In fact, an addition at the end of the Memphis stele records that the chiefs of Nahrin, Hatti and Sangar (Babylon) arrived before the king bearing gifts and requesting offering gifts (hetepu) in exchange, as well as asking for the breath of life.

Though good relations with Babylon existed during the reign of Tuthmosis III, this was the first mention of a Mitanni peace, and it is very possible that a treaty existed allowing Egypt to keep Palestine and part of the Mediterranean coast in exchange for Mitannian control of northern Syria. Underscoring this new alliance, with Nahrin, Amenhotep II had inscribed on a column between the fourth and fifth pylons at Karnak, "The chiefs (weru) of Mitanni (My-tn) come to him, their deliveries upon their backs, to request offering gifts from his majesty in quest of the breath of life". The location for this column in the Tuthmosid wadjyt, or columned hall, was significant, because the hall was venerated as the place where his father received a divine oracle proclaiming his future kingship.

It is also associated with the Tuthmosid line going back to Tuthmosis I, who was the first king to campaign in Syria. Furthermore, we also learn that Amenhotep II at least asked for the hand of the Mitannian king, Artatama I, in marriage. By the end of Amenhotep II's reign, the Mitanni who had been so recently a vile enemy of Egypt, were being portrayed as a close friend.

After these initial campaigns, the remainder of Amenhotep II's long reign was characterized by peace in the Two Lands, including Nubia where his father settled matters during his reign. This allowed him to somewhat aggressively pursue a building program that left his mark at nearly all the major sites where his father had worked. Some of these projects may have even been initiated during his co-regency with his father, for at Amada in Lower Nubia dedicated to Amun and Ra-Horakhty celebrated both equally, and at Karnak, he participated in his father's elimination of any vestiges of his hated stepmother, Hatshepsut.

There was also a bark chapel built celebrating his co-regency at Tod. However, he also left monuments at Pnub on Argo Island, at Sai, Uronarti, Kumma, Buhen, Qasr Ibrim, Sehel, Elephantine, Gebel Tingar, Gebel el-Silsila, Elkab, Armant, Karnak, Thebes, including his tomb and a funerary temple, Medamud,

Of these, his building work at Giza and Karnak are particularly notable. At Giza he built a temple dedicated to the god Horemakhet, a sun-god identified with the Great Sphinx. This Sphinx and its adjoining amphitheater became the site of a cult of royal ancestors, including Amenhotep II himself and his son, Tuthmosis IV, who set up the great dream stele between its paws.



The Sphinx's (Horemakhet) cult lasted well into Roman times and pilgrims left votive offerings in the enclosure wall of the amphitheater or in the chapels if possible. Hence, Amenhotep II's addition of a chapel to the cult was significant.

At Karnak, after finishing his father's work of eliminating Hatshepsut's name, he set about creating his sed-festival just as his father had done before him. This pavilion, reconstructed in modern times by Charles Van Siclen, was a court of relief carved square pillars with decorated walls on the sides, and has been dated to the late part of his reign. Following an old tradition, the decorations featured elaborate royal regalia for the king, especially emphasizing solar connections, including multiple sun discs on top of crowns, and tiny falcons set above the sun discs, creating an association with Ra-Horakhty.

It also included scenes of his mother. The building was built in front of Karnak's south entrance at the eighth pylon, which in effect, created a new main gateway to the complex. An inscription on one of the pillars implies that this may not have been to celebrate his first sed festival, though such text is difficult to interpret, and is sometimes thought to simply imply wishes expressed for the king's coming jubilees.

The gardens of Amun were directly in front of this chapel, but the building was dismantled at the end of the 18th Dynasty to accommodate alterations made by Horemheb. The material was later reused for a different building constructed by Seti I at the beginning of the 19th Dynasty.

Amenhotep II also built another temple to Amun in the northern Karnak district, a precinct that was later dedicated to Montu of Thebes. However, the material from this project was also later used to form part of the foundations of a temple constructed by Amenhotep III, which was still later adapted to building projects during the Greek

Period. However, he apparently participated in several other building projects in the area of Karnak including probably building a ceremonial residence or palace.

Also notable was his additions to nearby temple of Montu at Medamud about eight kilometers north, particularly since later there was a processional way between northern Karnak and Medamud.

Other than his mother, Amenhotep II made public none of his wives, though he certainly demonstrated his procreative powers. A number of princes are attested to, including another Amenhotep, Tuthmosis, Khaemwaset (possibly), Amenemopet, Ahmose, Webensenu and Nedjem, among others. Yet though he probably also sired a number of princesses, they like his queens, are difficult to document.

The lack of documentary evidence of his queens and princesses was doubtless a conscious rejection of the dynastic role played by woman as "god's wives of Amun". Perhaps he (as well as his father) realized that queens such as Hatshepsut, who represented the dynastic family, could be dangerous if they became too powerful.

As usual, different resources provide different time frames for Amenhotep II's reign. While the Chronicle of the Pharaohs by Peter A. Clayton gives his reign lasting from 1453 until 1419 BC, The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt provides a reign between 1427 until 1400 BC. Regardless, upon his death he was buried in the Valley of the Kings on the West Bank at Luxor - (ancient Thebes) in tomb KV35. Prior to the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb by Howard Carter, KV35 was the only royal burial in Egypt where the pharaoh was discovered in his own sarcophagus. However, he was not alone in his tomb for the priests in antiquity had used it for a hiding place for other royal mummies.

Tuthmosis IV (1419 and 1386 BC)



The 8th Pharaoh of Egypt's 18th Dynasty.

The Pharaoh Tuthmosis IV, is probably most famous for his Dream Stele, that can still be found today between the paws of the great [Sphinx](#) at Giza. Dreams were important in ancient Egypt and were considered to be divine predictions of the future.



In Tuthmosis IV's Dream Stele, he tells us that, while out on a hunting trip, he fell asleep in the shadow of the Sphinx (or apparently, the shadow of the Sphinx's head, for the monument was apparently buried in sand at the time). In the young prince's sleep, Re-Harakhte, the sun god embodied in the Sphinx, came to him in a dream and promised that if he would clear away the sand that engulfed the monument, Tuthmosis would become king of Egypt.

The stele reads:

Now the statue of the very great Khepri (the Great Sphinx) rest in this place, great of fame, sacred of respect, the shade of Ra resting on him. Memphis and every city on its two sides came to him, their arms in adoration to his face, bearing great offerings for his ka. One of these days it happened that prince Tuthmosis came travelling at the time of midday. He rested in the shadow of the great god. (Sleep and) dream (took possession of me) at the moment the sun was at zenith. Then he found the majesty of this noble god speaking from his own mouth like a father speaks to his son, and saying, 'Look at me, observe me, my son Tuthmosis. I am your father, Horemakhet-Khepri-Ra-Atum. I shall give to you the kingship (upon the land before the living)... (Behold, my condition is like one in illness), all (my limbs being ruined). The sand of

the desert, upon which I used to be, (now) confronts me; and it is in order to cause that you do what is in my heart that I have waited.



Tuthmosis IV and His Mother, Tiaa

Tuthmosis IV's name means, 'Born of the God Thoth'

His throne name was Men-kheperu-re, meaning 'Everlasting are the Manifestations of Re'. We can also find references to him under the names of Thuthmose IV, Thutmosis IV, and Djehutymes IV.

He was apparently the son of Amenhotep II by his wife, Tiaa, but Egyptologists speculate whether, because of the wording of the 'Dream Stele', his claim on the Egyptian throne was legitimate. In fact, other evidence supports this contention. His father, Amenhotep II, never recognized Tuthmosis as a co-regent, or announced any intent for Thutmosis to succeed him.

We know that Tuthmosis IV was probably married to Mutemwiya, who produced his heir to the throne, Amenhotep III, though he never acknowledged her as either a major or minor queen. It is possible, though now doubted by some, that she was the daughter of the Mitannian king, Artatama, who sent his daughter to the Egyptian court as part of a diplomatic exchange.

Other of his wives included Merytra, who we believe later changed her name to Tiaa (same as his mother's name) and a non-royal wife, Nefertiry. He probably also married one of his sisters named Iaret.

Tuthmosis IV is not the best documented of Egyptian pharaohs. We actually know very little about him in comparison to others of this dynasty. Little military action appears to have occurred during his reign, although our knowledge may be marred by

the lack of texts. We do know that there was a Nubian campaign in Year 8 of his rule, and that apparently there were also campaigns in Syria. However, even though the king is referred to twice as the 'conqueror of Syria' these may have actually been little more than policing actions, rather than full scale battles.



Little is also known of his building work. Tuthmosis IV did finish a giant obelisk that was originally quarried at Aswan under Tuthmosis III, his grandfather. At 32 meters (105 feet) it was the tallest Egyptian obelisk that we know of, and was uniquely intended to stand as a single obelisk at the Temple of Karnak. Most of the obelisks were usually erected in pairs. However, Tuthmosis III originally intended for there to be a pair of these Obelisks. Its counterpart developed a fault during the quarry process, and remains today joined to the bed-rock at Aswan Today, the finished obelisk stands outside St. John Lateran in Rome, rather than in Egypt.

He also began work at most of Egypt's major temple sites and four sites in Nubia, but almost all of this was simply adding to existing monuments. Most of his work was adding to the temples of his father and grandfather, and perhaps suggesting new sites and monuments to his son.

We know of his minor building projects in the following locations:

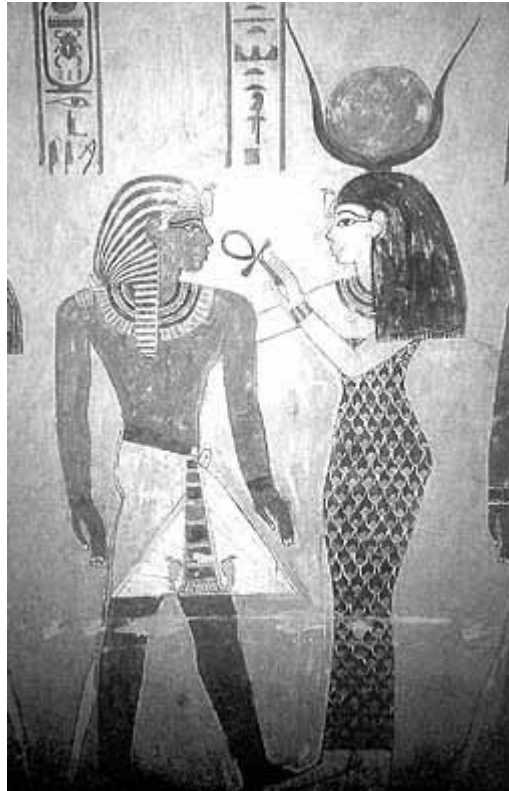
- The Delta at Alexandria
- Serapeum
- Heliopolis
- Giza
- Abusir
- Saqqara
- Memphis
- Crocodilopolis in the Fayoum
- Hermopolis
- Amarna
- Abydos (a chapel)
- Dendera

- Medamu
 - Karna
 - Luxor
 - The West Bank at Luxor (his tomb and mortuary temple)
 - Armant
 - Edfu
 - Elephantine
 - Konosso
-

His best attested building project we have available today is his own tomb KV 43, located in the Valley of the Kings and discovered by Howard Carter.



However, his mummy was missing from his tomb, having been found five years earlier in a cache of mummies located in the tomb of Amenhotep II. Perhaps better known are the fine private tombs built by his nobles on the West Bank at Luxor (ancient Thebes) in an area commonly referred to as the Tombs of the Nobles. These include such notable tombs as that of Nakht (TT 52) and Menna (TT 69).



From his tomb, the Deceased Tuthmosis IV
Receiving the Gift of Life from the Goddess, Hathor

Howard Carter made the first modern entrance into the tomb of Tuthmosis IV (KV 43) on January 18th, 1903. This was not an accidental discovery by Carter, for he had been looking for this specific tomb. On February 3rd, it was formally opened.

Like all the tombs of the Valley of the Kings, it had been plundered during antiquity, but there were still some amount of items left.

The tomb is of phase one style, the earliest in the Valley of the Kings, with its L-shaped structure. It follows the general style of KV 35 Amenhotep II) in design, size and complexity, as well as its placement under a storm-fed waterfall.

From the entrance we find a stairway leading to the first corridor, another stairway leading to a second stairway, which in turn leads directly to the ritual shaft. At the bottom of the ritual shaft is another single chamber. The ritual shaft opens directly into a two pillared hall. From the two pillared hall, the tomb takes a 90 degree left turn down another set of stairs to a third corridor, which leads to a final stairway and then an antechamber. The antechamber takes another 90 degree turn into the burial chamber, which has six pillars and four annexes, two on either side. Between the last two pillars of this chamber is a small stairway that leads to the crypt.

This tomb differs from KV 35 in several respects, including the crypt area, the alignment of the storage rooms. Significantly, we find the first occurrences of the 'magical niches' built into the walls which are to be found in all succeeding tombs until the time of Ramesses II.



Interestingly, while the tomb was carefully cut, the decorative plan of the tomb is virtually missing. Only the ritual shaft and the anteroom are painted, and these decorations appear to be hastily done. Both areas have ceiling with yellow stars on a dark blue background, and Kheker-friezes appear at the top of the decorated walls, which are painted a golden yellow. Also, in both of these locations, the king appears before various deities, and in each location these scenes are almost exactly the same, with the only material difference being the clothing of the deities.

The Hieratic text found on the south wall of the antechamber was not created by Tuthmosis, but rather by Horemheb. It refers to the robbery during antiquity of this tomb, and Horemheb's efforts to restore the damage made necessary by the illicit entry. Hence, Tuthmosis IV's mummy was not found in this tomb but would later be discovered to be one of those found in the tomb of Amenophis II.

While Tuthmosis IV's mummy was not found in his tomb, there were three subsidiary burials discovered, presumably offsprings of the king. Most all of the funerary equipment that was found was fragmentary, but consisted of the following:

Amenhotep III - Nebmaatre - (1382 - 1344 BC)

It is believed that Amenhotep III ruled for almost 40 years during the 18th Dynasty of Egypt's history that represented one of its most prosperous and stable periods. It was Amenhotep III's grandfather, Tuthmosis III, who is sometimes referred to as the Napoleon of ancient Egypt, who built the foundation of this success by dominating through military action Egypt's Syrian, Nubian and Libyan neighbors.

Because of that, little or no military actions were called for during his grandson's reign. The small police actions in Nubia that did take place were directed by his son and viceroy of Kush, Merymose (or perhaps an earlier viceroy) .

Amenhotep (or heqawaset) was this king's birth name, meaning "Amun is Pleased, Ruler of Thebes."

His throne name was Nub-maat-re, which means "Lord of Truth is Re."

Amenhotep III's birth is splendidly depicted in a series of reliefs inside a room on the east side of the temple of Luxor. Built by Amenhotep III, the room was dedicated to Amun. However, it portrays the creator god, Khnum of Elephantine at modern Aswan with his ram head, fashioning the child and his ka on a potter's wheel under the supervision of the goddess Isis.



The god Amun is then Tula, mother of Tiy (Tiye) who was the principle queen of Amenhotep III led to Amenhotep III's mother by Thoth, god of wisdom, after which Amun is shown in the presence of the goddesses Hathor and Mut while they nurse the future king

His father was Tuthmosis IV by one of that king's chief queens, Mutemwiya. She may have, though mostly in doubt now, been the daughter of the Mitannian king, Artatama. That queen was indeed probably sent to Egypt for the purposes of a diplomatic marriage.

It is more than likely that Amenhotep III succeeded to the throne of Egypt as a child, sometime between the ages of two and twelve years of age.

There is a statue of the treasurer Sobekhotep holding a prince Amenhotep-mer-khepseh that was most likely executed shortly before Tuthmosis IV's death, as well as a painting in the tomb of the royal nurse, Hekarnheh (TT64) portraying the prince as a young boy, though not a small child. This, and the fact that his mother is not so very prominently visible, along with other factors, suggests that he was more likely between six and twelve years of age at the time of his father's death.



Monumental statue of Amenhotep III and Queen Tiy, along with daughters

It is unlikely that his mother, Mutemwiya, served as a regent for the young king, and whoever may have been in charge at the beginning of his reign seems to have remained in the background.

Amenhotep III's own chief queen, who he married in year two of his reign, was not of royal blood, but came from a very substantial family. She was Tiy, the daughter of Yuya and his wife, Tuya, who owned vast holdings in the Delta. Yuya was also a powerful military leader. Their tomb, numbered KV46 in the Valley of the Kings, is well known.

His brother-in-law by this marriage, Anen, would during his reign also rise to great power as Chancellor of Lower Egypt, Second Prophet of Amun, sem-priest of Heliopolis, and Divine Father. It is possible that the king's early regency was carried out by his wife's family

However, it would seem that Amenhotep collected a large harem of ladies over the years, including several from diplomatic marriages, including Gilukhepa, a princess of Naharin, as well as two of his daughters (Isis and in year 30 of his reign, Sitamun or Satamun, who bore the title "great royal wife" simultaneously with her mother). We can document at least six of his children consisting of two sons and four daughters (other daughters including Henuttaneb and Nebetiah).

However, his probable oldest son, Tuthmosis who was a sem-priest, died early leaving the future heretic king, Amenhotep IV, otherwise known as [Akhenaten](#), as the crown prince.

The King's Early Years

Amenhotep III's reign can be split into two parts, with his earliest years given much to sportsmanship with a few minor military activities. While as usual, an expedition into Nubia in year five of his reign was given grandiose attention on some reliefs, it probably amounted to nothing more than a low key police action.

However, it may have pushed as far as south of the fifth cataract. It was recorded on inscriptions near Aswan and at Konosso in Nubia. There is also a stele in the British Museum recording a Nubian campaign, but it is unclear whether it references this first action, or one later in his reign.

There was also a Nubian rebellion reported at Ibhet, crushed by his son. While Amenhotep III was almost certainly not directly involved in this conflict, he records having slaughtered many within the space of a single hour. We learn from inscriptions that this campaign resulted in the capture of 150 Nubian men, 250 women, 175 children, 110 archers and 55 servants, added to the 312 right hands of the slain.

Perhaps to underscore the Kushite subjection to Egypt, he had built at Soleb, almost directly across the Nile from the Nubian capital at Kerma, a fortress known as Khaemmaat, along with a temple.

The Prosperity and International Relationships

However, by year 25 of Amenhotep III's reign, military problems seem to have been settled, and we find a long period of great building works and high art. It was also a period of lavish luxury at the royal court. The wealth needed to accomplish all of this did not come from conquests, but rather from foreign trade and an abundant supply of gold, mostly from the mines in the Wadi Hammamat and further south in Nubia.

Amenhotep III was unquestionably involved with international diplomatic efforts, which led to increased foreign trade. During his reign, we find a marked increase in Egyptian materials found on the Greek mainland. We also find many Egyptian place names, including Mycenae, Phaistos and Knossos first appearing in Egyptian inscriptions. We also find letters written between Amenhotep III and his peers in Babylon, Mitanni and Arzawa preserved in cuneiform writing on clay tablets. From a stele in his mortuary temple, we further learn that he sent at least one expedition to Punt.

It is rather clear that the nobility prospered during the reign of Amenhotep III. However, the plight of common Egyptians is less sure, and we have little evidence to suggest that they shared in Egypt's prosperity. Yet, Amenhotep III and his granary official Khaemhet boasted of the great crops of grain harvested in the king's 30th (jubilee) year. And while such evidence is hardly unbiased, the king was remembered even 1,000 years later as a fertility god, associated with agricultural success.

Building Projects

Though a number of Amenhotep III's building projects no longer exist, we find at Karnak almost a complete makeover of the temple, including his efforts to embellish the already monumental temple to Amun, as well as his the East Temple for the sun god and his own festival building.

His impact in the Karnak temple was thematic, leaving the impression of a warrior king whose victories honored both himself and the God Amun, and he changed the face of this temple almost completely. He had his workers dismantle the peristyle court in front of the Fourth Pylon, as well as the shrines associated with it, using them as fill for a new Pylon, the Third, on the east-west axis. This created a new entrance to the temple, and he had two rows of columns with open papyrus capitals erected down the center of the newly formed forecourt. At the south end of Karnak, he began construction on the Tenth Pylon, with a slightly different orientation than that of the Seventh and Eighth, in order for it to lead to a new entrance for the percent of the goddess Mut. He may have even started a new temple for her. To balance the south temple complex, he built a new shrine to the goddess Ma'at, the daughter of the sun-god, to the north of central Karnak.

At Luxor he built a new temple to the same god, including the still standing colonnaded court. That effort is considered a masterpiece of elegance and design and particular credit must be The Colossi of Memnon, given to his mater architect, Amenhotep son of Hapu.

He also built a monumental mortuary temple on the West Bank at Thebes - modern Luxor that is the single largest royal temple known to us from ancient Egypt. Unfortunately, it was built much too close to the flood plain and was in ruins by the 19th Dynasty, when material was quarried from it for new building projects. While some of the ground plan of the temple may be made out, the only material remains are the Colossi of Memnon.

These statues were misnamed by the Greeks, but actually depict Amenhotep III. The southern of the statues also depicts the two most important women in the king's life, his mother Mutemwiya and his wife, Queen Tiy. However, it should be noted that within the grounds of the temple, more fragments of colossal statuary have been found than in any other known sacred precinct. In the fields behind the statues, also stands a great, repaired stele that was once in the sanctuary of his temple, around which are located fragments of sculptures.

The West Bank was also the site of Amenhotep III's huge palace, called Malkata. Fragments of this building remain, unlike most other royal residences. From this scant evidence, it would seem that the walls were plastered and painted with lively scenes from nature. Next to the palace complex he also built a great harbor.

Further south on the west bank at Kom el-Samak, Amenhotep III also built a jubilee pavilion of painted mud brick and at Sumenu, some twenty kilometers south of Thebes the king built a temple dedicated to the cult of the crocodile god, Sobek.



A statue of Amenhotep III and Sobek

Along with these building projects, we also know that he developed and expanded cults at a number of other locations including Amada (for Amun and Ra-Horakhty), Hebenu and Hermopolis, where we find two colossus statues of baboons and an altar. There were other building projects in Egypt proper at Memphis, where blocks of brown quartzite remain from the king's great temple called "Nebmaatra United with Ptah", Elephantine (now destroyed) and a completed chapel at Elkab.

Building elements at Bubastis, Athribis, Letopolis and Heliopolis also attest to the king's interest in the eastern Delta. He also built temples and shrines in Nubia at Quban, Wadi es-Sebua, Sedinga, Soleb and Tabo Island. There were also building elements or stele in his name at Aniba, Buhen, Mirgissa, Kawa and Gebel Barkal.

Artistry of the Period

Artistically, many of the royal portraits of the king in sculpture are truly masterpieces of any historical age. After the Colossi of Memnon, the largest of these is the limestone statue of the king and queen with three small standing princesses discovered at Medinet Habu.

However, many other statues give the king a look of reflection, and bringing to life emotional emphasis. We find grand statues of black granite depicting a seated Amenhotep wearing the nemes headdress, unearthed by Belzoni from behind the Colossi of Memnon and from Tanis in the Delta. Other statues and some reliefs and paintings depict the king wearing the more helmet like khepresh, sometimes referred to as the Blue, or War Crown.



Amenhotep III wearing the Blue Crown

Even in recent years, some statuary of Amenhotep III continues to be discovered, such as an incredible six foot (1.83 meter) high pink quartzite statue of the king standing on a sledge and wearing the Double Crown of Egypt. It was discovered in the courtyard of Amenhotep III colonnade of the Luxor temple in 1989.

This particular statue was unearthed completely intact, with the only damage resulting from a careful removal of the name Amun during the reign of his son. This statue was probably executed late in his reign, regardless of the fact that it shows a youthful king.

So good were many of his statues that they were later usurped by kings, sometimes by them simply overwriting his cartouche with their own. At other times, such as in the case of the huge red granite head found by Belzoni and initially identified as representing Tuthmosis III, his statues were more extensively reworked (this example by Ramesses II).

We also find many other fine statues, paintings and reliefs executed during the life of Amenhotep III. Two well known portraits of his principle queen include a small ebony head now in Berlin, and a small faced and crowned head found by Petrie at the temple of Serabit el-Khadim in the Sinai. A cartouche on the front of the crown allowed precise identification as that of Tiye. We also find Tiye appearing with the king on temple walls at Soleb and west Thebes. However, there are also fine reliefs of her in some of the courtier tombs, such as TT47 belonging to Userhet and TT192 of Kheryuef.



Recently discovered and almost completely undamaged statue of Amenhotep III on a sledge

There was also a proliferation of private statues, as well as many fine private tombs with excellent artwork (such as TT55, the Tomb of Ramose during the reign of Amenhotep III, including a number representing Amenhotep son of Hapu, his well known architect, but also of other nobles and dignitaries. Other notable items include the set of rose granite lions originally placed before the temple at Soleb in Nubia, but later moved to the Temple at Gebel Barkal.

Religion and the King's Deification

It is likely that Amenhotep III was deified during his own lifetime, and that the worship of the sun god, Aten, by his son may have directly or indirectly also involved the worship of his father. Amenhotep III was somewhat insistent that he be identified with this sun god during his lifetime. From the time of his first jubilee in his 30 years of reign, we find scenes where he is depicted taking the role of Ra riding in his solar boat.

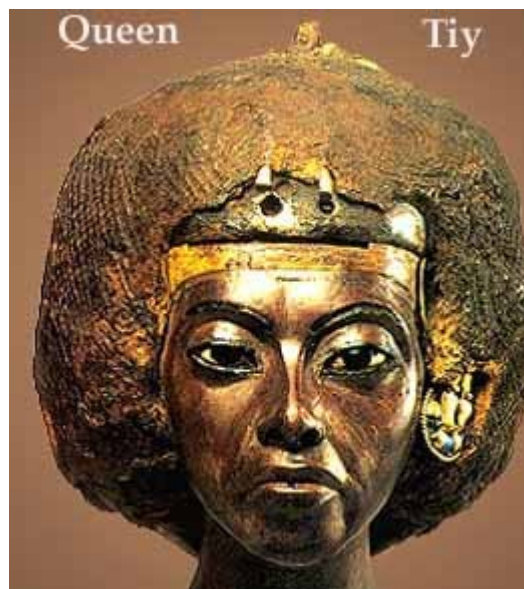
Of course, the king was expected to merge with the sun after his death, but in Amenhotep III's case, we find that he named his palace complex "the gleaming Aten", and used stamp seals for commodities that may be read, "Nebmaatra (one of his names) is the gleaming Aten". He consistently identified himself with the national deities rather than his royal predecessors, even representing himself as the substitute for major gods in a few instances. We even find during his reign the solarization of many well known gods, including Nekhbet, Amun, Thoth and Horus-khenty-khety.

Yet, no stele or statues we know for certain were dedicated to Amenhotep III as a major deity during his lifetime. It is notable that the deification of Ramesses II only 100 years later carried with it a significant number of monuments identifying him as a deity during his lifetime.

Nevertheless, it has been argued that his son, best known as Akhenaten, may have worshipped his father as Aten. There are many arguments against this, but it is clear that at least to some degree, it is true. After all, the deceased king was identified with the Aten upon his death.

But whether he was worshipped as such during his lifetime may ultimately depend on whether or not Akhenaten ruled as a co-regent before his father's death. If they did rule together, then objects venerating Amenhotep III during Akhenaten's reign could be seen as worship of a living deity, though not necessarily as the Aten. Regardless, this is all a matter of hot debate within Egyptology circles, though the answers today seem no clearer.

The End of the Reign



From clay docketts at his Malkata palace, we believe Amenhotep III may have died in about the 39th year of his rule, perhaps when he was only 45 years old.

His wife, Tiy, apparently outlived him by as many as twelve years. She is shown, along with her youngest daughter, Beket-Aten, in a relief on an Amarna Tomb that may be dated to between year nine and twelve of Akhetaten's reign.

From a group of well known documents called the Amarna Letters, we find inquiries about her health that lead us to believe that she may have lived in her son's capital for a time prior to her death. Regardless, upon her death, she may have first been buried at Amarna but was then returned to Thebes where she was buried along with her husband in tomb WV22 in the Valley of the Kings.

However, it is also possible that she may have been buried in tomb KV55, where objects bearing her name have also been discovered.

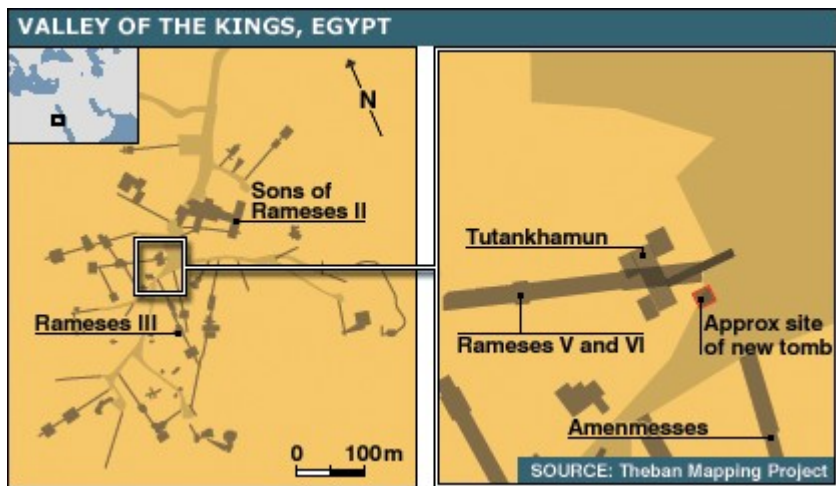
Neither the king or his queen were discovered in that tomb, but it is very possible Queen Tiy may be the "Elder Woman" from the cache of mummies found by Loret in KV35, the tomb of Amenhotep II.

For many years, it was also thought that Amenhotep III's body was also a part of that cache, but fairly recent analysis indicates that the body thought to be his may instead be that of his son, or possibly even Ay, one of the last kings of the 18th Dynasty.

[Pharaonic tomb find stuns Egypt](#)

BBC - February 10, 2006







[Intact tomb found in Egypt's Valley of Kings](#)
2 Part Story - MSNBC - February 10, 2006

[New Tomb Opened in Egypt's Valley of Kings](#)
National Geographic

Archaeologists have discovered an intact, ancient Egyptian tomb in the [Valley of the Kings](#), the first since [King Tutankhamun's Tomb](#) was found in 1922. The tomb

contains five sarcophagi with mummies, breaking the nearly century long belief that there's nothing more to find in the valley where some of Egypt's greatest pharaohs were buried.

Found in the tomb was the red granite head of [King Amenhotep III](#) - father of the [Pharaoh Akhenaten](#).



[Researchers discover 3,400-year-old artifact depicting Queen Ti](#) MSNBC - January 25, 2006



Egyptologists have discovered a statue of Queen Ti, wife of one of Egypt's greatest pharaohs and grandmother to the boy-king Tutankhamun, at an ancient temple in Luxor, an Egyptian antiquities official said. The roughly 3,400-year-old statue was well-preserved. Ti's husband, Amenhotep III, presided over an era which saw a renaissance in Egyptian art. A number of cartouches, or royal name signs, of Amenhotep III were found on the statue, and the statue's design and features allowed researchers to identify it as a New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty statue of Queen Ti.

[Akhenaten](#) was the son of Amenhotep III and Queen Ti, a descendent of a Hebrew tribe.



[Queen Tiy](#) wearing a [double feathered crown](#)

Pharaoh Akhenaten



1369-1332 BC: Amenhotep IV - Akhenaten

The Pharaoh Akhenaten was known as the Heretic King. He was the tenth King of the 18th Dynasty. Egyptologists are still trying to figure out what actually happened during his lifetime as much of the truth was buried, for all time, after he died.

Akhenaten lived at the peak of Egypt's imperial glory. Egypt had never been richer, more powerful, or more secure. Up and down the Nile, workers built hundreds of temples to pay homage to the Gods. They believed that if the Gods were pleased, Egypt would prosper. And so it did.

Akhenaten and his family lived in the great religious center of Thebes, city of the God Amun. There were thousands of priests who served the Gods. Religion was the 'business' of the time, many earning their living connected to the worship of the gods.

All indications are that as a child Akhenaten was a family outcast. Scientists are studying the fact that Akhenaten suffered from a disease called Marfan Syndrome, a genetic defect that damages the body's connective tissue. Symptoms include, short torso, long head, neck, arms, hand and feet, pronounced collarbones, pot belly, heavy thighs, and poor muscle tone. Those who inherit it are often unusually tall and are likely to have weakened aortas that can rupture. They can die at an early age. If Akhnaton had the disease each of his daughters had a 50-50 chance of inheriting it. That is why his daughters are shown with similar symptoms.

Akhenaten was the son of Amenhotep III and Queen Tiy, a descendent of a Hebrew tribe. The largest statue in the Cairo Museum shows Amenhotep III and his family. He and Queen Tiy (pronounced 'Tee') had four daughters and two sons. Akhenaten's brother, Tutmoses was later named high priest of Memphis. The other son, Amenhotep IV (Later to take the name Akhenaten) seemed to be ignored by the rest of the family. He never appeared in any portraits and was never taken to public events. He received no honors. It was as if the God Amun had excluded him. He was rejected by the world for some unknown reason. He was never shown with his family nor mentioned on monuments. Yet his mother favored him.



Akhenaten and Queen Tiy

In 1352 BC. Akhenaten ascended the throne, succeeding his father Amenhotep III who had died. Akhenaten was just a teenager at the time, but it was the desire of Queen Tiy that he rule. In some version of the story, it is written that father and son shared the throne briefly.

Akhenaten's reign lasted 16 years. This was a difficult time in Egyptian history. Many scholars maintain that Akhenaten was responsible for this decline, but evidence suggests that it had already started.

Akhenaten is principally famous for his religious reforms, where the polytheism of Egypt was to be supplanted by monotheism centered around Aten, the god of the solar disc. This was possibly a move to lessen the political power of the Priests. Now the Pharaoh, not the priesthood, was the sole link between the people and Aten which effectively ended the power of the various temples.

Akhenaten built a temple to his god Aten immediately outside the east gate of the temple of Amun at Karnak, but clearly the coexistence of the two cults could not last. He therefore proscribed the cult of Amun, closed the god's temples, took over the revenues. He then sent his officials around to destroy Amun's statues and to desecrate the worship sites. These actions were so contrary to the traditional that opposition arose against him. The estates of the great temples of Thebes, Memphis and

Heliopolis reverted to the throne. Corruption grew out of the mismanagement of such large levies.



THE FAMILY

Akhenaten's Great Royal Wife was Queen Nefertiti.



Queen Nefertiti is often referred to in history as "The Most Beautiful Woman in the World." The Berlin bust, seen from two different angles, is indeed, the most famous depiction of Queen Nefertiti. Found in the workshop of the famed sculptor Thutmose, the bust is believed to be a sculptor's model. The technique which begins with a carved piece of limestone, requires the stone core to be first plastered and then richly painted. Flesh tones on the face give the bust life.

Her full lips are enhanced by a bold red. Although the crystal inlay is missing from her left eye, both eyelids and brows are outlined in black. Her graceful elongated neck balances the tall, flat-top crown which adorns her sleek head. The vibrant colors of the her necklace and crown contrast the yellow-brown of her smooth skin. While

everything is sculpted to perfection, the one flaw of the piece is a broken left ear. Because this remarkable sculpture is still in existence, it is no wonder why Nefertiti remains "The Most Beautiful Woman in the World."

Nefertiti's origins are confusing. It has been suggested to me that Tiy was also her mother. Another suggestion is that Nefertiti was Akhenaten's cousin. Her wet nurse was the wife of the vizier Ay, who could have been Tiy's brother. Ay sometimes called himself "the God's father," suggesting that he might have been Akhenaten's father-in-law. However Ay never specifically refers to himself as the father of Nefertiti, although there are references that Nefertiti's sister, Mutnojme, is featured prominently in the decorations of the tomb of Ay. We will never know the truth of this bloodline. Perhaps they didn't know either.



This shrine stela also from the early part of the Amarna period depicts Akhenaten, Nefertiti, and Princesses Meretaten, Mekeaten, and Ankhesenpaaten worshipping the Aten as a family. Dorothea Arnold in her article "Aspects of the Royal Female Image during the Amarna Period" discusses the plethora of reliefs depicting intimate family moments. While Akhenaten leans forward to give Meretaten a kiss, Mekeaten plays on her mother's lap and gazes up lovingly.

At the same time Ankhesenpaaten, the smallest, sits on Nefertiti's shoulder and fiddles with her earring. Arnold claims that the shrine stela "relates to the Aten religion's concept of creation" in which the King and Queen are viewed as "a primeval 'first pair.'" At the top of the composition, the sun-god, Aten, represented by a raised circle, extends his life-giving rays to the Royal Family. The relief uses the concept of the "window of appearances" or a snapshot of life. The figures are framed by a fictive structure which suggests the form of a square window. Aldred in his book *Egyptian Art* calls this "a brief moment in the lives of five beings as they are caught in an act of mutual affection". In actuality, the royal palace at Akhetaten had a window from which the royal couple could observe the city and address their subjects.

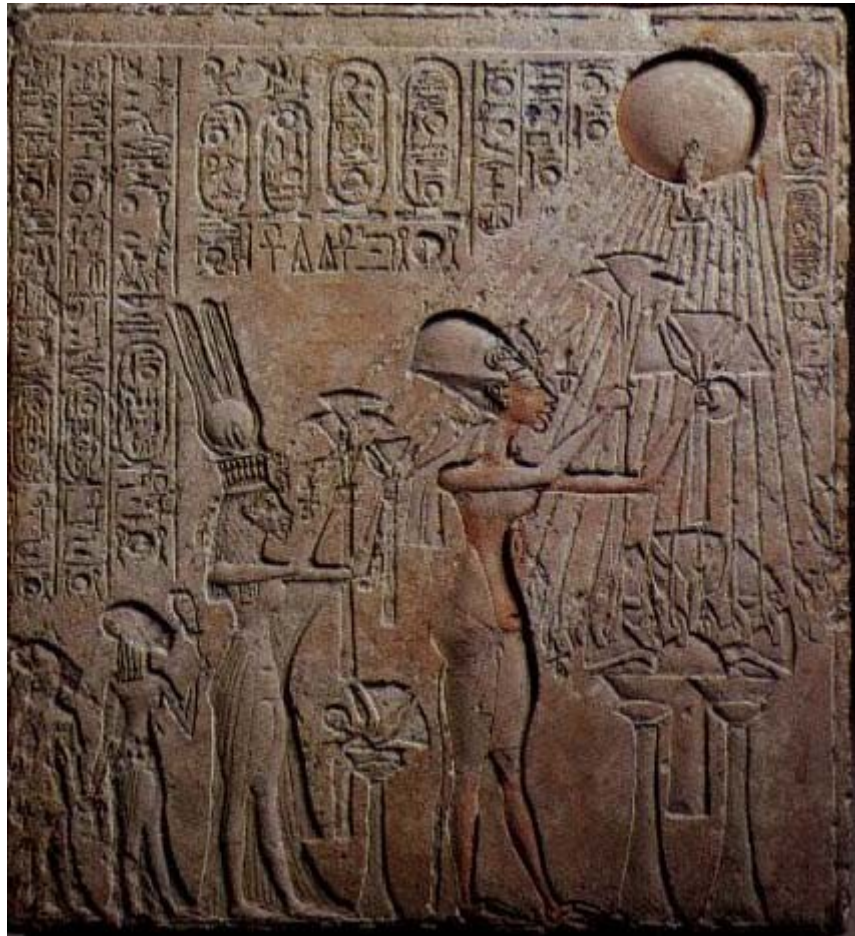
It is accepted that Akhenaten and Nefertiti had six daughters. No son was ever shown in reliefs.

The names of the daughters were; Meritaten (1349 BC) - Meketaten and Ankhenspaaten (1346 BC) - Neferneferuaten (1339 BC) - Neferneferure and Setepenre (1338).

In 1337 BC the official family, with all six of Nefertiti's daughters was shown for the last time.

In 1336 BC Meketaten died in childbirth.

In 1335 Nefertiti seemed to vanish, assumed dead.



This limestone relief found in the Royal Tomb at Amarna depicts Akhenaten, Nefertiti, and two of their daughters making an offering to the sun-disk Aten. Akhenaten and Nefertiti carry flowers to be laid on the table beneath the "life-giving" rays of the Aten. The figures are carved in the grotesque style, a characteristic of the early half of the Amarna period. Nefertiti, sporting the double plume headdress mentioned in the stela dedication, is the petite figure placed behind her larger scale husband. The composition mirrors early artistic representations of the royal couple. To emphasize the strength and power of the pharaoh, Egyptian iconographical tradition required the female figure to be smaller in scale than the male.

Akhenaten's minor wives included Merytaten, Kiya, Mekytaten, and Ankhesenpaaten.



AKHENATEN'S VISION



It was said that one day Akhenaten had a vision wherein he saw a sun disc between two mountains. He felt that God was guiding him to make change. He was shown the God, Aten, as the Sun Disk - the Light. He felt guided by Aten to build a city between the two mountains.

In the sixth year of his reign Akhenaten rejected the Gods of Thebes. They were never part of his childhood anyway since he had been shunned as a child. Akhenaten had declared for the first time in recorded history that there was only one God - the concept of monotheism. Overnight he turned 2,000 years of Egyptian religious upside down...



THE AMARNA PERIOD

To make a complete break, the king and his queen, left Thebes behind and moved to a new capital in Middle Egypt, 180 miles north of Thebes half way between Memphis and Thebes.

It was a virgin site, not previously dedicated to any other god or goddess, and he named it Akhetaten - The Horizon of the Aten.

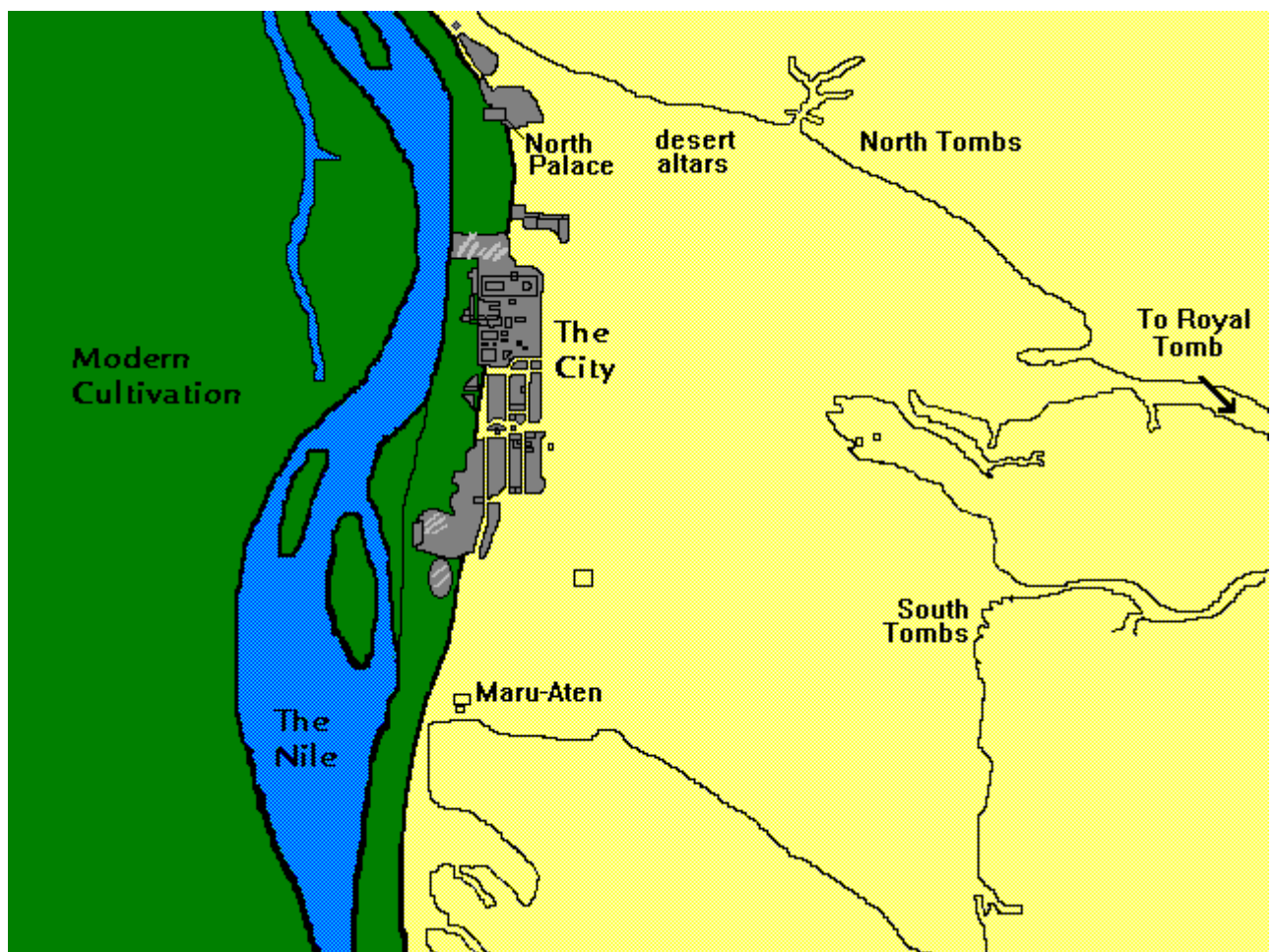
Today the site is known as El-Amarna.

In essence he was an cult leader taking his following into the mountains and desert to build a new paradise.





Akhenaten established his new religion by building an entire city dedicated to Aten complete with a necropolis and royal tomb.



In 1346 BC work began on this new city built in middle Egypt, on a site thought to have been chosen as it was not tainted by the worship of the other gods.

In 1344 BC the central section of Akhetaten was completed.



Nefertiti's prominent role in Egyptian royal rule and religious worship reflects her influence in the public sphere. During the early years of her royal reign, Nefertiti as part of her religious conversion changed her name. Nefertiti which means "The-beautiful-one -is come" became Neferneferuaten-Nefertiti or "The-Aten-is -radiant-of-radiance [because] the-beautiful-one-is come". A different interpretation of the name change, translated Neferneferuaten to mean--"Perfect One of the Aten's Perfection".

Following his wife's lead, Amenhotep IV changed his name in the fifth year of his reign to Akhenaten.

In 1342 BC the seat of government was transferred to Akhetaten.



ART

Akhenaten changed thousands of years of art in Egypt.

Gone were the images of Amun and the other gods of Egypt, now replaced by Aten, the solar disc.

When Akhenaten built his monuments with images of the Pharaoh, he moved away from the traditions of a strong, handsome muscular Pharaoh. Images of Pharaohs with idealized bodies were gone.

The Pharaoh was shown as misshapen as was his wife Nefertiti. It became fashionable to show images of the entire royal family with elongated heads, faces, fingers, toes, wide hips, This gave the artists of Amarna new freedom to show scenes of the real life of the Pharaoh, something that had never been done before.

The temple was covered with scenes of the Aten, the sun disc with its rays shining down, ending in hands holding ankhs, the hieroglyph for life.

The people wondered why the images of the other Gods were not represented.

Akhenaten was the first Pharaoh to have images and paintings



made of himself and his family, as they actually looked.



Akhenaten as the Sphinx worshipping Aten

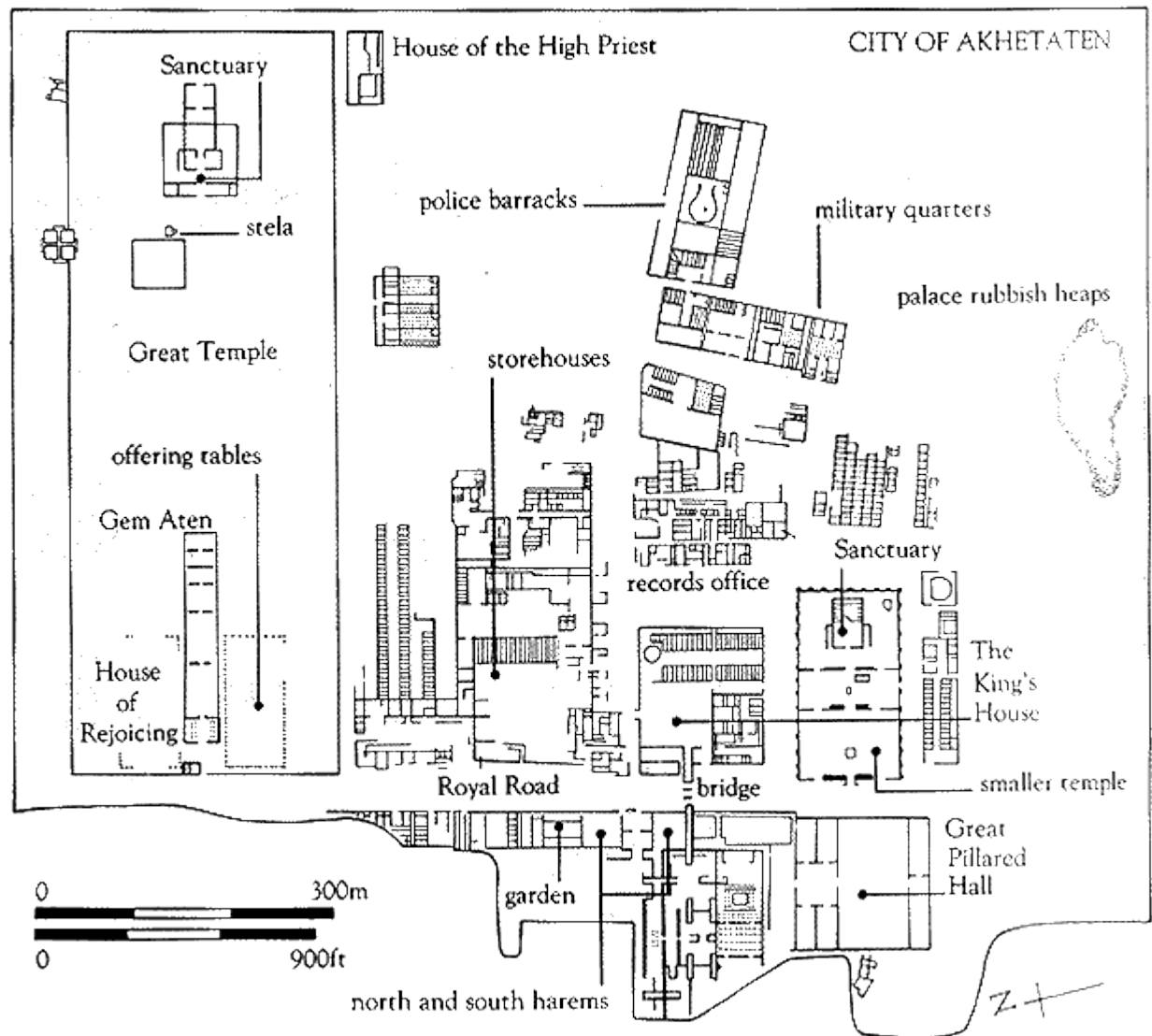


RELIGION

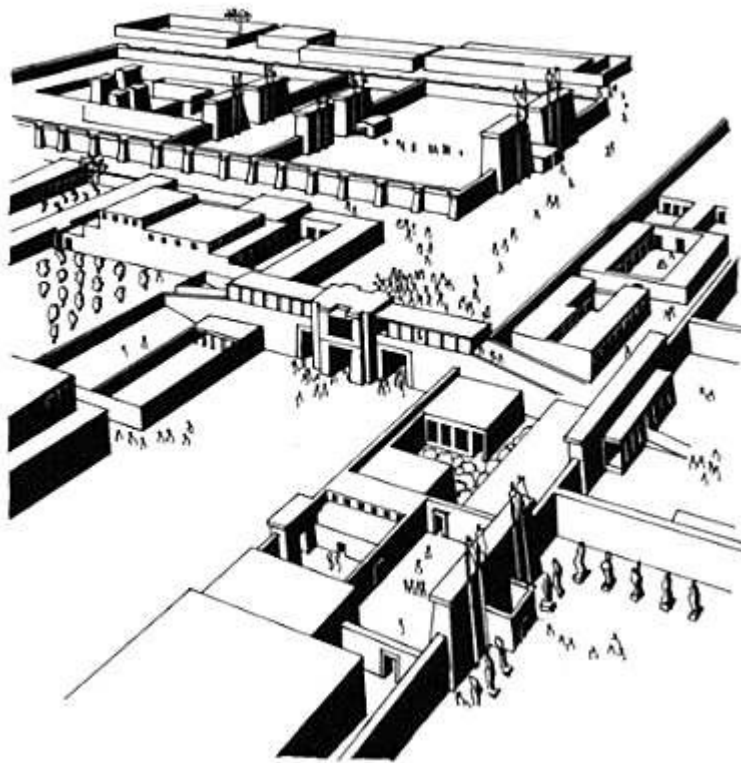
The priests worried about the God Amun and the fact that the 'Rebel Pharaoh' had declared their god extinct and deserted the religious capitol of Egypt. Gone were the royal offerings. The resources of Egypt were flowing out of the established cities of Egypt and into the desert. People who earned their livings based on the old religions - wood carvers, scarab makers, and others were out of business. The people worried about their afterlife and what would happen now that they were not worshipping the traditional Gods. All of the old belief systems into the next world were discarded. The vision of the afterlife changed.



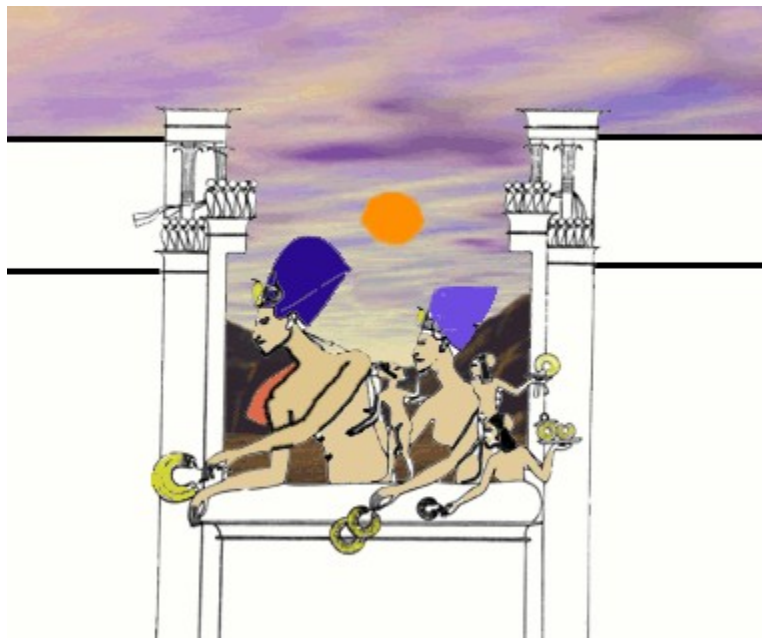
THE CITY



In its finished state Armana offered a theatrical setting for celebrating Akhenaten's kingship. The city sprawled for miles over the plain. There were elegant palaces, statues of the Pharaoh, good housing throughout the city, a royal road that ran through the center of town, probably the widest street in the ancient world. It was designed for chariot processions, with Akhenaten leading the way.



Spanning the road, a bridge connected the palace with the temple area. Akhnaton and Nefertiti appeared before the people on the balcony known as the "window of appearances", tossing down gold ornaments and other gifts.





THE PEOPLE

At its height the city grew to more than 10,000 people - bureaucrats, artisans, boatmen, priests, traders and their families. Though most were happy, many were not, especially those who did not like to stand in the open sun. Akhenaten worshippers spent lots of time in the sun.

Akhenaten wanted everyone to be happy. He created a beautiful, idealistic religion and Utopia for his people but many just didn't understand it. Akhenaten was not living in the reality of his worshippers. Though he had found himself and his God but the people were used to Gods they could see, carved in stone with beautiful bodies, many with heads of animals. Akhenaten's God was too much of an abstraction. Aten was the basic principle of the universe, Light! They also wondered why the sun God only shed its rays on the royal family and not everyone.

According to present evidence, however, it appears that it was only the upper echelons of society which embraced the new religion with any fervor. Excavations at Amarna have indicated that even here the old way of religion continued among the ordinary people. On a wider scale, throughout Egypt, the new cult does not seem to have had much effect at a common level except, of course, in dismantling the priesthood and closing the temples; but then the ordinary populace had had little to do with the religious establishment anyway, except on the high days and holidays when the god's statue would be carried in procession from the sanctuary outside the great temple walls.



THE END TIMES

Akhenaten lived in his dream in Amarna for ten years as conditions grew worse in Egypt. He remained isolated from the true problems of the people. Akhenaten apparently neglected foreign policy, allowing Egypt's captured territories to be taken back, though it seems likely that this image can be partially explained by the iconography of the time, which downplayed his role as warrior.



Nefertiti is depicted in her advanced years. She wears a long, white linen dress that allows the contours of her body to be seen. It has been speculated that this small statuette was the model for a life size representation that was never executed. Arnold points out that, although she is past her prime, she is not old. While this may be true, the sagging features of the statuette do indicate that she is no longer the vivacious Queen.

In 1335 BC Nefertiti, Akhenaten's wife and companion, is said to have disappeared and most likely died. His mother Tiy had also died as did his minor wife, Kia. That combined with the loss of his daughter made Akhenaten feel alone and depressed.

Nefertiti's disappearance coincided with the sudden appearance of a young man named Smenkhkare. Smenkhkare, who was given the same title (Neferneferuaten) as the now vanished Nefertiti, was crowned co-regent to Akhenaten when he (Smenkhkare) was about sixteen. He was married to Akhenaten's eldest daughter, Merytaten.

There is uncertainty about the relationship between Akhenaten and his successors, Smenkhkare and Tutankhamun. The biggest mystery associated with Smenkhkare was where he came from. It is possible that both he and Tutankhamun were Akhenaten's sons by another wife, possibly Kiya who was 'much loved' of the Pharaoh. As there was inbreeding to keep the line pure we may never know the relationships within their family.

It is also a matter of great controversy as to whether or not Smenkhkare continued to reign after Akhenaten died. According to Dr. Donald Redford, a professor of Egyptology and the director of the Akhenaten Temple Project, Smenkhkare may have succeeded Akhenaten by a short while, during which he made half-hearted attempts at going back to the old religion (something which probably wouldn't have happened while Akhenaten was alive). Another thing that suggests that he outlived Akhenaten are references to him made in certain tombs. He was also buried in the old capital.

But here one has to consider the way Akhenaten behaved concerning those people who were known to be his children. Every one of his six daughters, whenever referred to in writings from the period, was repeatedly called 'the king's daughter, of his loins, (daughter's name)'.

In Egypt, as with any other kingdom of the ancient or not so ancient world, male heirs were much desired. If Akhenaten had a son, he almost certainly would have repeatedly said so.

Cyril Aldred, a prominent Egyptologist who has written several books about Akhenaten, uses the argument that Smenkhkare must have been born three years before Akhenaten's reign began, thereby reducing the likelihood of his being Akhenaten's child.

Yet another possibility is that one of Akhenaten's many sisters was the mother of Smenkhkare. Because Smenkhkare appeared at the same time that Nefertiti seemingly vanished from view, and because he shared the title "Beloved of Akhenaten" with Nefertiti, some scholars believe that Nefertiti and Smenkhkare were one and the same. Nefertiti did have more power than many of the other queens in Egypt, and is often depicted wearing certain crowns that were normally reserved for kings. Thus, it is perhaps not too out of line to think that she might have disguised herself as a man and shared kingship with Akhenaten. However, Redford notes that, for one thing, it would be odd even for the Amarna family to have Nefertiti posing as a man and marrying her own daughter. Not only that, but to deny the existence of Smenkhkare, one would have to ignore one major finding: the body in Tomb 55.

[Tutankhaten](#) came to the throne when he was about eight years old and became known as "The boy king" by modern people. He became quite famous when his tomb was discovered by Howard Carter in the 1920s. Tutankhaten succeeded Akhenaten and Smenkhkare and was married to Akhenaten's daughter Ankhesenpaaten. The couple soon changed their names to Tutankhamen and Ankhesenamun, moved away from Akhetaten, and reestablished the old religion. Tutankhaten reigned until he was about eighteen when he died.

Tutankhaten's origins are just as hazy as Smenkhkare's. Some would claim that he was Kiya's son by Akhenaten. However, if Tutankhaten and Smenkhkare were really brothers, as the bodies of the two suggest, then this would again bring up the question of the likelihood of Smenkhkare being Akhenaten's son.

One theory is that Tutankhaten was Akhenaten's brother. That would lead to the conclusion that both Smenkhkare and Tutankhaten were sons of queen Tiye. They both bear a strong resemblance to certain portraits of Tiye, but Tiye may have been too old to have children by the time Tutankhaten was born. Another problem is that Amenhotep III was, in all probability, well dead by this time, although there is much speculation about a co-regency between Akhenaten and his father.

One intriguing discovery is an inscription which calls Tutankhaten "The king's son, of his loins". This could be interpreted in a number of ways. One is that Tutankhaten really was Akhenaten's child. However, this possibility has already been mostly ruled out. Another possibility is that Amenhotep III remained virile and active even in his

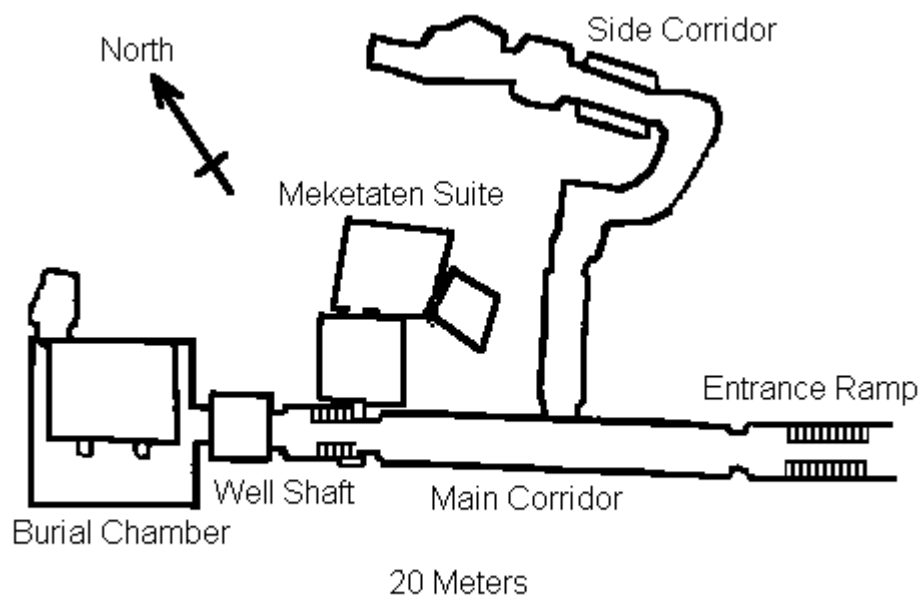
last years and was able to father Tutankhaten just before he died (assuming that there was a co-regency).

Yet a third possibility is that Tutankhaten was Smenkhkare's son. If Smenkhkare fathered Tutankhaten the same year that he married Merytaten, and then went on to outlive Akhenaten by about three years, then that would make Tutankhaten just barely seven when he came to the throne of Egypt (Tutankhaten was thought to have come to the throne when he was eight or nine).

In 1332 BC Akhenaten died, the circumstances never explained. His memory and all that he had created soon to be erased from history not to be found for centuries later.



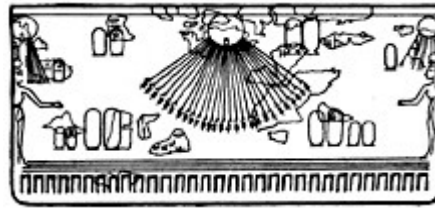
AKHENATEN ROYAL TOMB IN AMARNA



In 1344 BC the building of the [Royal Tomb at Akhetaten](#) began. It was completed while Akhenaten was pharaoh.

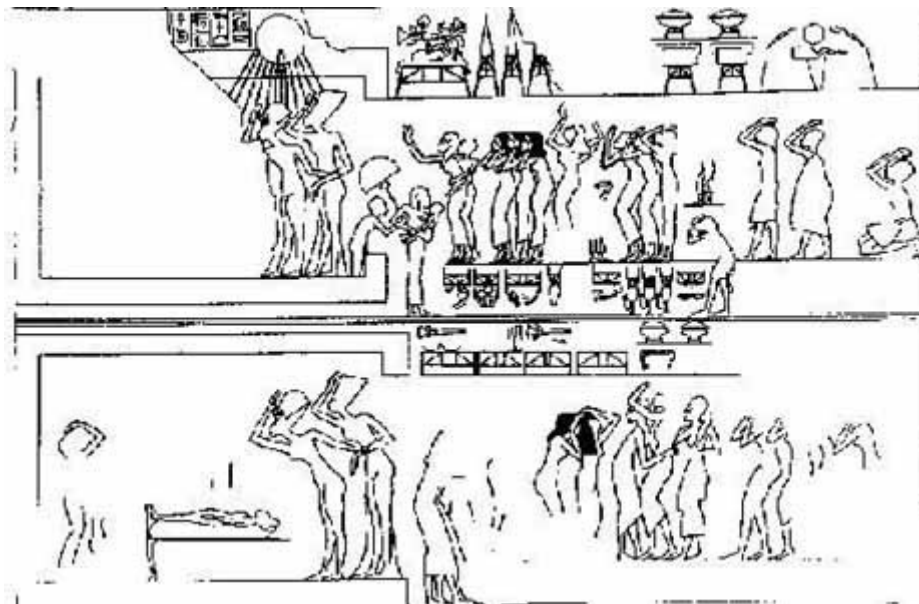
The Royal Tomb of Akhenaten was very similar to a 'standard' tomb found in the Valley of the Kings - a straight forward design of corridors and rooms along a single axis, but this tomb was to change with the addition of two more separate suites of rooms:

Research at the Royal Tomb has given evidence that Akhenaten was buried in a pink granite sarcophagus - although both this and the remains of another sarcophagus found at the tomb, were smashed to pieces and then scattered over some distance.



Akhenaten's Sarcophagus

However enough of Akhenaten's sarcophagus has been recovered to reconstruct it, the corners had figures of Queen Nefertiti extending protective arms like the guardian of the four quarters.



Royal Tomb at Amarna: Akhenaten and Nefertiti grieve over daughter
Drawing of Relief (N. Davies, The Rock Tombs of el-Amrna, 1903-08)



TOMB 55 IN THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS

Of all the royal mummies ever discovered none has ever caused more controversy than the one found in tomb 55 of the Valley of the Kings.

At the beginning of the 20th Century, Theodore Davis, a wealthy American excavating in Egypt, discovered a tomb in which a burial from the Armana period had been reinterred. This tomb was clearly unfinished, and the burial a hasty one. Gilded wooden inlay panels on the floor and against the wall. They bore the damaged image of Akhenaten worshipping the sun disc and the name of Queen Tiy.

In a niche were four beautiful alabaster jars that held the internal organs of the mummies. Lying on the floor was a badly damaged but beautiful coffin made with thousands of paste in-lays and semi-precious stones in the shape of protective wings. The cartouches containing the occupants name had been hacked out.

When they opened the coffin they found a mummy wrapped in gold-leaf. But as they touched the mummy it crumbled to dust leaving the excavators with a pile of disarticulated bones at the bottom of the coffin. But beneath the skeleton, the last sheet of gold, seemed to have the damaged named of Akhenaten written on it. The pelvis was wide like a female's. The head was elongated.

What really became of Akhenaten's mummy still remains a mystery. Fragments of sculpture and carving from the royal tomb at Akhetaten shows that his body was originally put there, but no sign of the mummy remains. It is possible that followers of the Aten feared for it's destruction, which would deny him eternal life, and moved the body to a place of safety.

Akhenaten is perhaps unfairly not credited with being a particularly successful Pharaoh. Records seem to indicate that he allowed Egyptian influence wane but this may not be true. These ideas are based on the famous *Amarna Tablets* found in Akhetaten in many of which Egyptian vassal cities plead for assistance, but no replies are preserved.

As there is no surviving record of Egyptian territory being lost at this time it is possible that Akhenaten was merely skillfully playing one city against the other to achieve through diplomacy what would otherwise require military force.



THE AMARNA TABLETS - LETTERS



The el-Amarna letters, a collection of correspondence between various states and Egypt, were found in the remains of the ancient city of Akhetaten, built by Akhenaten around 1370 BCE. Some of the documents belong to the time of Amenhotep III, while others are from the time of Akhenaten. They provide invaluable insight into the foreign affairs of several countries in the Late Bronze Age.

The first Amarna tablets were found by local inhabitants in 1887. They form the majority of the corpus. Subsequent excavations at the site have yielded less than 50 out of the 382 itemized tablets and fragments which form the Amarna corpus known to date.

The majority of the Amarna tablets are letters. These letters were sent to the Egyptian Pharaohs Amenophis III and his son Akhenaten around the middle of the 14th century B.C. The correspondents were kings of Babylonia, Assyria, Hatti and Mitanni, minor kings and rulers of the Near East at that time, and vassals of the Egyptian Empire.

Almost immediately following their discovery, the Amarna tablets were deciphered, studied and published. Their importance as a major source for the knowledge of the history and politics of the Ancient Near East during the 14th Century B.C. was recognized. The tablets presented several difficulties to scholars.

The Amarna tablets are written in Akkadian cuneiform script and present many features which are peculiar and unknown from any other Akkadian dialect. This was most evident in the letters sent from Canaan, which were written in a mixed language (Canaanite-Akkadian).

The Amarna letters from Canaan have proved to be the most important source for the study of the Canaanite dialects in the pre-Israelite period.



AFTER AKHENATEN'S DEATH

Soon after his death the followers at Amana, unable to understand what their Pharaoh had been preaching, abandoned the city, and returned to Thebes and the familiar Gods. The priests branded the name Akhenaten, as a heretic. It was erased from the monuments of Egypt.

It was his son, a young Pharaoh named Tutankhamen who the world would get to know. King Tut moved the capital back to Thebes and returned to the old religion.

Akhenaten's successors, the generals Ay and Horemheb reestablished the temples of Amun they selected their priests from the military, enabling the Pharaoh to keep tighter controls over the religious orders.

Later Pharaohs attempted to erase all memories of Akhenaten and his religion. Much of the distinctive art of the period was destroyed and the buildings dismantled to be reused. Many of the Talitat blocks from the Aten temples in Thebes were reused as rubble infill for later pylons where they were rediscovered during restoration work and reassembled.

Three thousand years ago, the rebel Pharaoh Akhenaten preached monotheism and enraged the Nile Valley. Less than 100 years after Akhenaten's death, Moses would be preaching monotheism on the bank of the Nile River, to the Israelis. The idea of a single God once the radical belief of an isolated heretic is now embraced by Moslems, Christians, and Jews throughout the world. The vision of Akhenaten lives on!

Amarna was lost in antiquity until the end of the 19th Century. It was uncovered by the founder of modern Egyptology, Sir Flinders Petrie. They discovered a vast lost city in the dessert with temples, palaces and wide streets.

The cult of the Aten is considered by some to be a predecessor of modern monotheism.



Freud on Akhenaten

There are prophets who brought the concept of Monotheism to the World.

Among them were Akhenaten, [Moses](#) and [Zarathrusta](#).

Many people feel they were all the same soul.

One of Europe's great thinkers, particularly affected by the abundant mysteries being uncovered in Egypt, was Sigmund Freud. The founder of modern day Psychoanalysis, he spent many years studying ancient Egypt. Toward the end of his life, after nearly two decades of research, Freud published what would become his final book. It was titled *Moses and Monotheism*.

Here Freud investigated several unorthodox theories regarding the true histories of Moses and the roots of Judaism and Christianity. Supported by historical facts, Freud concluded that Moses had been an Egyptian who brought out of his native country the doctrine which was given to his followers, thus forming the foundation of Judaism.

Freud places Moses in Egypt, as an initiate of the Aten religion of Pharaoh Akhnaton. Although, one of the most significant of Egypt's ancient royals, Akhenaten stands, to this day, as one of history's great enigmas. Although, he was not the central figure, the inclusion of him in Freud's book would add to a growing interest in this hidden king.



Akhenaten has also been known to be the same soul as [Hermes](#), [Thoth](#) and Oedipus.

Smenkhkare (Ankhkheperure) 1336-1334 BC



Smenkhkare was the eleventh pharaoh of Egypt's famous 18th Dynasty. In point of fact, he may never have ruled on his own, though in the later years of Akhenaten reign, he was probably a co-regent.

His birth name was Smenkh-ka-re (or Djeser-kheperu, meaning "Vigorous is the Soul of Re, Holy of Manifestations"). His name can also be found as Smenkhkara. His Throne name was Ankh-kheperu-re, meaning "Living are the Manifestations of Re".

Smenkhkare is a study in the difficulties of Egyptology, and why the list of kings of Egypt vary from scholar to scholar. While there are many times we are able to determine the factual history of Egypt in some great detail, at other times, even in otherwise well documented eras, darkness suddenly surrounds events due to an absolute lack of good evidence. Sometimes this evidence has simply not been discovered, but at other times, the evidence would exist, had it not been hacked away by the ancient Egyptians themselves. Such is the case with Smenkhkare.

We know very little of Smenkhkare's life, or even where he was buried, though he is entwined with the mysteries of tomb KV 55 on the West Bank at Luxor (ancient Thebes). If the mummy found in that tomb was indeed Smenkhkare, then he probably died at around the age of 20 to 25. However, because of the heresy of the Amarna kings, the cartouches and much other evidence within KV 55 were mostly destroyed. One of the factors that has led scholars to believe that the mummy is in fact Smenkhkare is a process of elimination.

At first the mummy was thought to be that of Queen Tiy, but subsequent examination of the remains indicate that instead, it is the mummy of a young man.

It was also speculated that the mummy could have been Akhenaten, who we think was Smenkhkare's father, but Akhenaten ruled Egypt for 17 years and it seems difficult to believe he could therefore have died at such an early age. Hence, the plausibility that the mummy is that of Smenkhkare.

Further analysis has also revealed that the mummy's blood type and that of Tutankhamun are the same, and that the skull dimensions are very similar, leading scholars to believe that not only is this Smenkhkare, but that he was indeed Tutankhamun's older brother.

He was probably either a younger brother or older son of Akhenaten, but if a son, he would not have probably been also a son of Nefertiti. We believe she had only daughters. He would have therefore probably been the son of some minor wife, perhaps even Kiya, who we also believe to be the mother of Tutankhamun. Most Egyptologists believe that if he ruled at all after the death of Akhenaten, it would probably only have been for a few months, but there is also a strong possibility that he did not survive Akhenaten's reign.

He was succeeded by the famous Tutankhamun.

He was married to Merytaten who was probably his eldest sister, the senior heiress of the royal blood line, but she seems to have died early, leaving her sister, Ankhesenpaten in this position. It was Ankhesenpaten who married a somewhat younger Tutankhamun. Smenkhkare and Merytaten are pictured in the tomb of Meryre II at Amarna, and were once shown on a relief at Memphis.

Yet there has, over time, been a great deal of controversy on all these facts. It would seem that Smenkhkare became co-regent shortly after the death of Akhenaten's principle wife, Nefertiti. Speculation at times have run rampant, including one theory that Nefertiti herself had actually disguised herself as a male in the custom of Hatahepsut, becoming co-regent.

Lending some credence to this is the "Co-regency Stela, a fragment of which was found in Amarna. Originally, the stela depicted three figures, identified as Akhenaten, Nefertiti, and princess Merytaten. In later years, however, the name of Nefertiti had been excised and replaced with the name of King Ankhkheperure Neferneferuaten, and the name of the princess had been replaced with that of Akhenaten and Nefertiti's third daughter, Ankhesenpaaten. It is curious that Nefertiti's figure, clearly that of a female, would be relabeled with the name of a king. Second, the erasure of Merytaten's name and the usurpation by Ankhesenpaaten suggests that Merytaten died before the end of Akhenaten's reign.

There is even controversy surrounding Smenkhkare's wife, Merytaten. It has been suggested that rather than dying early, she outlived her husband and served as a nominal co-regent under the name of Ankhetkheperure, a feminization of her late husband's throne name.

However, the dominant theory today seems to place Smenkhkare as an older son of Akhenaten, though there is almost an equal likelihood that he was Akhenaten's brother, and that he was likely made co-regent at about the age of 16. For his

coronation, a huge brick hall was added to the Great Palace at Amarna, with no fewer than 544 square columns in its main room.

He most probably had differences with Ankhenaten's religious philosophies early on. The funerary equipment that he had made for a possible unfinished tomb at Amarna had almost no sign of the sun cult of Akhenaten.

Yet he seems to have wavered, perhaps out of respect to his father or brother.

Inscriptions on elements of his funerary equipment also show that he altered his name to Neferneferuaten, the -aten indicating an acquiescence to Akhenaten's religious beliefs.

However, this is another area of confusion about Smenkhkare among scholars. We are also told by authoritative sources that Neferneferuaten was perhaps one of Nefertiti's names, and thus the continued controversy surrounding the possibility that Smenkhkare was none other than Nefertiti herself.

However, the name of Smenkhkare and Neferneferuaten are actually never used together, suggesting that they were two different people.

Later still, we read of the existence of a "priest and scribe of divine offerings of Amun in the 'House of Ankh-kheperu-re' at Thebes", suggesting that he intended to not be buried at Amarna, but rather in the Valley of the Kings at Thebes.

This information comes from a stele dating from Smenkhkare's third year of rule, and partly states that:

Regnal year 3, third month of Inundation, day 10. The King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands Ankhkheperure Beloved of Aten, the Son of Re Neferneferuaten Beloved of Waenre. Giving worship to Amun, kissing the ground to Wenennefer by the lay priest, scribe of the divine offerings of Amun in the Mansion of Ankhkheperure in Thebes, Pawah, born to Yotefseneb. He says:

"My wish is to see you, O lord of persea trees! May your throat take the north wind, that you may give satiety without eating and drunkenness without drinking. My wish is to look at you, that my heart might rejoice, O Amun, protector of the poor man: you are the father of the one who has no mother and the husband of the widow. Pleasant is the utterance of your name: it is like the taste of life . . . [etc.]

"Come back to us, O lord of continuity. You were here before anything had come into being, and you will be here when they are gone. As you caused me to see the darkness that is yours to give, make light for me so that I can see you . . .

"O Amun, O great lord who can be found by seeking him, may you drive off fear! Set rejoicing in people's heart(s). Joyful is the one who sees you, O Amun: he is in festival every day!"

For the Ka of the lay priest and scribe of the temple of Amun in the Mansion of Ankhkheperure, Pawah, born to Yotefseneb: "For your Ka! Spend a nice day amongst

your townsmen." His brother, the outline draftsman Batchay of the Mansion of Ankhkheperure. (Murnane, 1995).

It is likely that Smenkhkare tired of the religious heresy of Akhenaten's reign, and late in his life, possibly moved to Memphis, the old secular capital of Egypt. Perhaps over time his role in Egypt's history will become clearer to us, but for now, his existence is one of the great mysteries of Egypt's past.

King Tutankhamen



Tutankhamun, named Tutankhaten early in his life, was the 12th Pharaoh of the Eighteenth dynasty of Egypt. He ruled from 1334-1323 BC and lived ca. 1341 BC - 1323 BC, during the period known as the New Kingdom.

His original name, Tutankhaten, meant "Living Image of Aten", while Tutankhamun meant "Living Image of Amun". He is possibly also the Nibhurrereya of the Amarna letters.

In historical terms, Tutankhamun is of only moderate significance, primarily as a figure managing the beginning of the transition from the heretical Atenism of his predecessor Akhenaten back to the familiar Egyptian religion.

As Tutankhamun began his reign at age 9, a considerable responsibility for his reign must also be assigned to his vizier and eventual successor, Ay. Nonetheless, Tutankhamun is in modern times the most famous of the Pharaohs, and the only one to have a nickname in popular culture ("King Tut").

The 1922 discovery by Howard Carter of his (nearly) intact tomb received worldwide press coverage and sparked a renewed public interest in Ancient Egypt, of which Tutankhamun remains the popular face.

Family

Tutankhamun's parentage is uncertain. An inscription calls him a king's son, but it is debated which king was meant. Most scholars think that he was probably a son either of Amenhotep III (though probably not by his Great Royal Wife Tiye), or of Amenhotep III's son Amenhotep IV (better known as Akhenaten), perhaps with his enigmatic second queen, Kiya. It should be noted that when Tutankhaten succeeded Akhenaten to the throne, Amenhotep III had been dead for some time; the duration is thought by some Egyptologists to have been seventeen years, although on this, as on so many questions about the Amarna period, there is no scholarly consensus.

Tutankhamun ruled Egypt for eight to ten years; examinations of his mummy show that he was a young adult when he died. Recent CT scans place Tut at age 19. This conclusion was reached after images of Tut's teeth were examined, and were found to be consistent with the teeth of a 19 year old. That would place his birth around 1342 BC-1340 BC, and would make it less likely that Amenhotep III was his father.



Tutankhamun from the back of his gold throne.



Ankhesenpaaten, Tutankhamun's wife -
Image from the back of his gold throne.

Tutankhamun was married to Ankhesenpaaten, a daughter of Akhenaten. Ankhesenpaaten also changed her name from the 'aten' endings to the 'amun' ending, becoming Ankhesenamun. They had two known children, both stillborn their mummies were discovered in his tomb.

Reign

During Tutankhamun's reign, Akhenaten's Amarna revolution (Atenism) began to be reversed. [Akhenaten](#) had attempted to supplant the existing priesthood and gods with a god who was until then considered minor, Aten.

In year 3 of Tutankhamun's reign (1331 BC), when he was still a boy of about 11 and probably under the influence of two older advisors (notably Akhenaten's vizier Ay), the ban on the old pantheon of gods and their temples was lifted, the traditional privileges restored to their priesthoods, and the capital moved back to Thebes.

The young pharaoh also adopted the name Tutankhamun, changing it from his birth name Tutankhaten. Because of his age at the time these decisions were made, it is generally thought that most if not all the responsibility for them falls on his vizier Ay and perhaps other advisors.

Tutankhamun died at the age of 19 by a head injury. Many suspect that he was murdered. He was buried in the Valley of the Kings. Two mummified fetuses were found in coffins that had been sealed by his name. These are believed to have been his children that were born prematurely.

Events after his death

A now-famous letter to the Hittite king Suppiluliumas I from a widowed queen of Egypt, explaining her problems and asking for one of his sons as a husband, has been attributed to Ankhesenamun (among others). Suspicious of this good fortune, Suppiluliumas I first sent a messenger to make inquiries on the truth of the young queen's story. After reporting her plight back to Suppiluliumas I, he sent his son, Zannanza, accepting her offer.

However, he got no further than the border before he died, perhaps murdered. If Ankhesenamun were the queen in question, and his death a murder, it was probably at the orders of Horemheb or Ay, who both had the opportunity and the motive.

In any event, after Tutankhamun's death Ankhesenamun married Ay (a signet ring, with both Ay and Ankehesenamun's name was found), possibly under coercion, and shortly afterwards disappeared from recorded history.

Tutankhamun was briefly succeeded by the elder of his two advisors, Ay, and then by the other, Horemheb, who obliterated most of the evidence of the reigns of Akhenaten, Tutankhamun, and Ay.

Although all the other tombs in the Valley of the Kings at Thebes were later plundered, the tomb in which Tutankhamen was ultimately buried was hidden by rock chips dumped from cutting the tomb of a later king. Tutankhamen's tomb was discovered in 1922 by Howard Carter. It was filled with extraordinary treasure, including a solid gold coffin, a gold mask, jewelry, and many artifacts.



[Enter King Tutankhamun's Tomb](#)

Cause of death

For a long time the cause of Tutankhamun's death was unknown, and was the root of much speculation. How old was the king when he died? Did he suffer from any physical abnormalities? Had he been murdered? Many of these questions were finally answered in early 2005 when the results of a set of CT scans on the mummy were released. The body was originally inspected by Howard Carter's team in the early 1920s, though they were primarily interested in recovering the jewelry and amulets from the body.

To remove the objects from the body, which in many cases were stuck fast by the hardened embalming resins used, Carter's team cut up the mummy into various pieces: the arms and legs were detached, the torso cut in half and the head was severed. Hot knives were used to remove it from the golden mask to which it was cemented by resin. Since the body was placed back in its sarcophagus in 1926, the mummy has subsequently been X-rayed three times: first in 1968 by a group from the University of Liverpool, then in 1978 by a group from the University of Michigan and finally in 2005 a team of Egyptian scientists led by Dr. Zahi Hawass, Secretary General of the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities, conducted a CT scan on the mummy.

Early (pre-2005) X-rays of his mummy had revealed a dense spot at the lower back of the skull. This had been interpreted as a chronic subdural hematoma, which would have been caused by a blow. Such an injury could have been the result of an accident, but it had also been suggested that the young pharaoh was murdered. If this is the case, there are a number of theories as to who was responsible: one popular candidate was his immediate successor Ay. Interestingly, there are seemingly signs of calcification within the supposed injury, which if true meant Tutankhamun lived for a fairly extensive period of time (on the order of several months) after the injury was inflicted.

Much confusion had been caused by a small loose sliver of bone within the upper cranial cavity, which was discovered from the same X-ray analysis. Some people have mistaken this visible bone fragment for the supposed head injury. In fact, since Tutankhamun's brain was removed post mortem in the mummification process, and considerable quantities of now-hardened resin introduced into the skull on at least two separate occasions after that, had the fragment resulted from a pre-mortem injury, it almost certainly would not still be loose in the cranial cavity. It therefore almost certainly represented post-mummification damage.

2005 research

On March 8, 2005, Egyptian archaeologist Zahi Hawass revealed the results of a CT scan performed on the pharaoh's mummy. The scan uncovered no evidence for a blow to the back of the head as well as no evidence suggesting foul play. There was a hole in the head, but it appeared to have been drilled, presumably by embalmers. A fracture to Tutankhamun's left thighbone was interpreted as evidence that suggests the pharaoh badly broke his leg before he died, and his leg became infected; however, members of the Egyptian-led research team recognized as a less likely possibility that the fracture was caused by the embalmers. 1,700 images were produced of Tutankhamun's mummy during the 15-minute CT scan.

Much was learned about the young king's life. His age at death was estimated at 19 years, based on physical developments that set upper and lower limits to his age. The king had been in general good health, and there were no signs of any major infectious disease or malnutrition during childhood. He was slight of build, and was roughly 170 cm (5 $\frac{7}{8}$ ft) tall. He had large front incisor teeth and the overbite characteristic of the rest of the Thutmosid line of kings to which he belonged.

He also had a pronounced dolichocephalic (elongated) skull, though it was within normal bounds and highly unlikely to have been pathologic in cause. Given the fact that many of the royal depictions of Akhenaten (possibly his father, certainly a relation), often featured an elongated head, it is likely an exaggeration of a family trait, rather than a distinct abnormality more typical of a condition like Marfan's syndrome, as had been suggested.

A slight bend to his spine was also found, but the scientists agreed that that there was no associated evidence to suggest that it was pathological in nature, and that it was much more likely to have been caused during the embalming process. This ended speculation based on the previous X-rays that Tutankhamun had suffered from scoliosis.

The 2005 conclusion by a team of Egyptian scientists, based on the CT scan findings, confirmed that Tutankhamun died of a swift attack of gangrene after breaking his leg. After consultations with Italian and Swiss experts, the Egyptian scientists found that the fracture in Tutankhamun's left leg most likely occurred only days before his death, which had then become gangrenous and led directly to his death.

The fracture was not sustained during the mummification process or as a result of some damage to the mummy as claimed by Howard Carter. The Egyptian scientists have also found no evidence that he had been struck in the head and no other

indication he was killed, as had been previously speculated. Despite the relatively poor condition of the mummy, the Egyptian team found evidence that great care had been given to the body of Tutankhamun during the embalming process. They found five distinct embalming materials, which were applied to the body at various stages of the mummification process. This counters previous assertions that the king's body had been prepared carelessly and in a hurry.

Tutankhamun in popular culture

Tutankhamun is the world's best known pharaoh, partly because his tomb is among the best preserved, and his image and associated artifacts the most-exhibited. He has also entered popular culture - he has, for example, been commemorated in the whimsical song "King Tut" by comedian Steve Martin, and in a series of historical novels by Lynda Robinson. As Jon Manchip White writes, in his forward to the 1977 edition of Carter's *The Discovery of the Tomb of Tutankhamun*, "The pharaoh who in life was one of the least esteemed of Egypt's kings has become in death the most renowned."

Facial Reconstruction - 2005

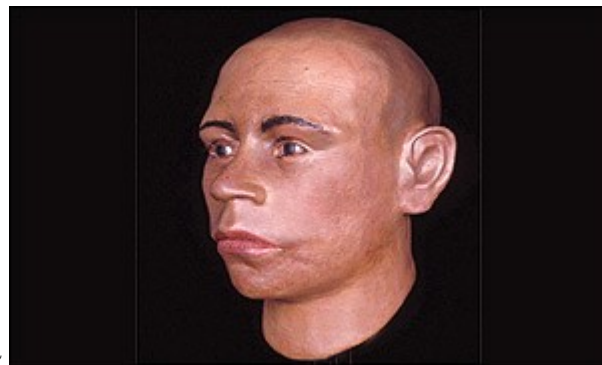
In 2005, three teams of scientists (Egyptian, French and American), in partnership with the National Geographic Society, developed a new facial likeness of Tutankhamun. The Egyptian team worked from 1,700 three-dimensional CT scans of the pharaoh's skull. The French and American teams worked plastic molds created from these -- but the Americans were never told whom they were reconstructing. All three teams created silicon molds bearing what decades of archaeological and forensic research show to be the most accurate replications of Tutankhamun's features since his royal artisans prepared the splendors of his tomb.

[Face of Tutankhamun reconstructed](#) BBC May 10, 2005





[Tut's life and death unmasked](#) BBC - October 2002



A high-tech facial reconstruction has shed new light on the looks of King Tutankhamun, the teenage king of ancient Egypt immortalized for nearly a century by his golden death mask. Scientists and special effects artists used digital techniques applied in crime investigations to fashion a fiberglass model they say provides the closest possible likeness of the pharaoh's looks. The model shows a wide-faced young man with high cheekbones, smaller eyes and a heavy brow.

References:

Howard Carter, Arthur C. Mace, *The Discovery of the Tomb of Tutankhamen*. 1977

C. Nicholas Reeves, *The Complete Tutankhamun: The King, the Tomb, the Royal Treasure*. 1990

Bob Brier, *The Murder of Tutankhamen: A True Story* 1998

In the News ...

[Tut's gem hints at space impact](#) BBC - July 20, 2006



Research: Meteorite Crash Helped Form King Tut Necklace - Discovery News - June 30, 2006



Yellow-green glass carved into a beetle-shaped ornament and found on a necklace worn by the ancient King Tutankhamen was created by a meteorite fireball, according to new research. The carving is known as a scarab, which are ancient Egyptian fertility symbols shaped like dung beetles. In 1999, Italian geologists performed a chemical composition test on Tut's scarab, which is the centerpiece of a colorful necklace that archaeologist Howard Carter found in King Tut's Valley of the Kings' tomb in Luxor.

The geologists determined the scarab was made out of natural desert glass for the king, who reigned from 1333 to 1323 B.C. Such glass is only found in the Great Sand Sea of the eastern Sahara desert. With a silica content of 98 percent, it is the purest known glass in the world. The desert region, located 500 miles southwest of Cairo, yields this glass in a remote 49.7 by 15.5 rectangular area. "I think an Egyptian craftsman obtained the glass and worked it into a point or scraper tool," said Mark Boslough, who led a recent study on how the glass formed.

Boslough, an impact physics expert at Sandia National Laboratories in New Mexico, added, "Glass fractures in ways that create sharp, useful shapes, so pieces commonly were used for tools. The glass is also often quite beautiful with interesting colors, so a jewelry maker might have taken an old tool and reworked it into the scarab." Since most scientists believe heat from a meteorite strike produced Great Sand Sea glass,

otherwise known as Libyan Desert glass, Boslough created computer simulations of how that could have happened.

He determined a 390-foot-wide asteroid traveling at 12.4 miles per second likely broke up in Earth's atmosphere around 30 million years ago, when the glass formed. "The velocity of the impacting object would have produced more energy than a nuclear explosion," he told Discovery News. "It not only would have had nuclear explosive scale, but its energy would all have been concentrated downwards. After the meteorite broke up in Earth's atmosphere, the temperature of the resulting fireball would have been as hot as the sun's surface. Like a blowtorch melting wax, the heat would have melted sand and sandstone into thin layers, which, when cooled, resulted in glass that later was blown into piles across the desert."

Boslough said additional evidence supports the fireball theory. "Shock minerals," for example, have been found in the same desert. These are minerals, such as quartz, which reveal sheer plane structures under magnification. Scientists believe such structures resulted from the sudden deformation caused by asteroid and fireball impacts.

Farouk El-Baz, a research professor and director of the Center for Remote Sensing at Boston University, at first was critical of Boslough's theory. He said, "If this glass is of meteoric origin, there should be a crater of that age." In March, however, El-Baz himself found remnants of the largest crater in the Saharan desert. It is a double-ringed crater the size of Cairo's urban region. El-Baz now suggests an extraterrestrial impact that resulted in the crater may have been responsible for the desert glass. This theory differs from Boslough's in that it means the asteroid collided with Earth in a sudden hit and did not break into a fireball beforehand. Boslough countered, "The newly discovered crater is 100 kilometers (around 62 miles) away from where the desert glass is located. Also, why don't we see this glass elsewhere?" Boslough and his team studying desert glass to determine what trace gases it might contain. The information could help to further explain what happened millions of years ago when the glass formed.

In the News ...

Ay (Kheperkheperure) 1325 - 1321



Ay was probably an old man (at least 70) when he inherited the throne from Tutankhamun, apparently by marrying Tutankhamun's widow, Ankhesenamun. There seems to have been considerable intrigue to this marriage, likely against her wishes, as Ay was probably her grandfather.

Further, it would seem that she was not even regarded as a dominant wife, as paintings in his tomb usually showed Ay accompanied by Tiye, an older wife. In fact, we learn from Hittite archives that Ankhesenamun wrote to Suppiliumas, the Hittite king, requesting one of his sons for her to marry and make pharaoh. After some investigation by Suppiliumas, this request was granted, but his son, Zannanza was killed enroute while traveling through Syria.

Evidence of Ankhesenamun's marriage to Ay was noted by Professor Percy Newberry, who recorded a ring he found in Cairo in the 1920s with the cartouches of Ay and Ankhesenamun inscribed side by side, a typical way of indicating marriage. This wedding must have happened rapidly, for Ay officiated at Tutankhamun's funeral as a king wearing the Blue Crown, thus enhancing his claim to the throne.

His reign was brief, believed to only have been four years. It is likely that Ankhesenamun died very shortly afterwards, for there is no mention of her beyond the Cairo ring. In fact, her image has been hacked out on several monuments, and it has been suggested that her dealings with the Hittites may have disgraced her, resulting in her death.

Ay (it-netjer) means "Father of God. His Throne name was Kheperkheperu-re, meaning "Everlasting are the Manifestations of Re".

He is first documented as a Master of Horses at the court of Akhenaten, though he was probably originally from Akhmin, where was responsible for the rock chapel to the local god, Min.

His career is fairly well documented during the reign of Akhenaten, when he rose to the position of Vizier and royal chancellor. He probably never held any priestly office prior to becoming king, however, but was instead a military man like most of the men of power during this period. He may have been related to Yuya, the father of Queen Tiye, making him the brother-in-law of Amenophis III

Is is believed Ay reigned in Egypt between 1325 and 1321 BC, and was burred in Tomb KV 23 in the Valley of the Kings, though his mummy has never been positively identified. It has been suggested that the mummy from the 1881 cache originally identified as Amenhotep III might rather be that of Ay, but this is probably doubtful. This tomb was probably originally meant for Tutankhamun.

Ay's sarcophagus was very similar to Tutankhamun's with winged goddesses at each corner. Also present, as in Tutankhamun's tomb, were decorative designs featuring the representation of the twelve monkeys, symbolizing the night hours on one of the burial chamber walls.

Totally unique to any royal tomb are beautiful bird hunting scenes. The tomb was discovered by Belzoni in 1816.

It was probably Horenheb who succeeded Ay and who wrecked havoc in Ay's tomb in the Valley of the Kings. When Belzoni found the tomb, the sarcophagus was in fragments and his figure was hacked out and his name excised in the wall paintings and text. Likewise, little of Ay's building projects can be identified probably because Horenheb probably usurped these as well.

In Ay's mortuary temple near Medinet Habu, he had his name inscribed on two quartzite colossi of Tutankhamun, but these too were modified by Horenheb when he took over Ay's temple complex. Ay had nominally carried on the heretic religious practices of Akhenaten, and it would be Horemheb who would put an end to this.

It should also be noted that early on, Ay began construction of one of the largest tombs at El-Amarna, containing the longer of the two surviving versions of the Hymn to the Aten. The last decoration in Ay's el-Amarna tomb was probably created in the ninth year of Akenaten's reign. However, this tomb was later abandoned in favor of the tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

Horemheb (Djeserkheperure) 1323 - 1295

The fourteenth king of the 18th Dynasty was chief of the army during Tutankhamun's reign.

When Tutankhamun died, Ay succeeded the throne. Ay favored Horemheb and kept him on as a military leader.

When Ay died without an heir, Horemheb was made king.

Restoring order was his main objective. Once accomplished, Horemheb moved to Memphis and began work on internal affairs.

He returned properties of the temples to the rightful priests and lands to the rightful owners.

He had restoration projects and building additions in Karnak.

He erected shrines and a temple to Ptah.

He built tombs at Thebes, in the Valley of the Kings, and Memphis.

He was noted for admonishing high ranking officials against cheating the poor and misappropriating the use of slaves and properties.

He promised the death penalty for such offenses.

Horemheb had no heir so he appointed a military leader to succeed him. That leader was Ramesses I.

Inside his tomb





19th DYNASTY

Ramesses I (Menpehtyre) 1295 - 1294

The first king of the 19th Dynasty was the son of a military commander named Seti.

Ramesses I entered the military service and worked his way up to commander of troops, superintendent of the cavalry and eventually general.

A short time later he became vizier to King Horemheb. He was also Primate of Egypt, which was the high priest of Amon, and was in charge of all the temples in Egypt.

Horemheb died with no heir so Ramesses I assumed the throne.

His queen, Sitre, was the mother of Seti I, who was already a veteran military commander. Ramesses was originally buried in the Valley of the Kings.

His tomb was later vandalized so the priests removed the body to Deir el Bahri.



The tomb of Ramesses I, founder of the great lineage of Ramessid rulers, is one of the smallest in the Valley of the Kings.

Ramesses I was a soldier chosen by Horemheb, who also began his career as a soldier, to be his successor.

Ramesses I is regarded as the first ruler of Egypt's 19th Dynasty, but only ruled for less than two years.

The tomb (KV 16) was discovered on or before October 11, 1817 by Giovanni Battista Belzoni just before his discovery of the much more significant tomb of Seti I. It is located in a small lateral valley perpendicular to the main Valley of the Kings Wadi. While small, the tomb has wall paintings of excellent workmanship.

Having proceeded through a passage thirty-two feet long, and eight feet wide, I descended a staircase of twenty-eight feet, and reached a tolerably large and well-painted room - seventeen feet long, and twenty-one wide.

The ceiling was in good preservation, but not in the best style. There is a sarcophagus of granite, with two mummies in it, and in a corner a statue standing erect, six feet six inches high, and beautifully cut out of sycamore-wood: it is nearly perfect except the nose.

There are a number of little images of wood, well carved, representing symbolical figures. Some had a lion's head, others a fox's, others a monkey's.

One had a land-tortoise instead of a head.

There is a calf with the head of a hippopotamus.

At each side of this chamber is a smaller one, eight feet wide, and seven feet long; and at the end of it another chamber, ten feet long by seven wide.

The sarcophagus was covered with hieroglyphics merely painted, or outlined: it faced south-east by east.

The tomb is rectilinear in structure with only a single corridor, unlike most the rest of the royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings. The corridor is located between two descending sets of stairways, and is the shortest of any royal tomb in the valley. The second set of stairs opens directly into the burial chamber.

A large, granite sarcophagus dominates the burial chamber. The paintings on the sarcophagus are not finished, and were hurriedly done. The decorations of the tomb, like those of Horemheb, are related to the *Book of Gates* and all have blue backgrounds.



While the decorations are well done, there are no reliefs. In the burial chamber, Ramesses, presenting offerings to Atum-Re-Khepri, is led into the presence of Osiris by Horus, Atum and Neith. There is also an unusual depiction of the Pharaoh in a ceremony of jubilation between a hawk and jackal-headed figure representing the spirits of the cities of Nekhen and Pe.

The burial chamber and left annex are the only rooms in the tomb that are decorated, and it is very likely that the same craftsman who worked on Horemheb's tomb also worked on this one.



3,000-year-old mummy - Pharaoh Ramesses I - ruled Egypt from 1292-1290 BC returning to Egypt from the US - 150 years after it was looted from its home.

Seti I - Sethos I - Menmaatre 1394 - 1279



Seti I was the father of perhaps Egypt's greatest rulers, Ramesses II, and was in his own right also a great leader. His birth name is Seti Mery-en-ptah, meaning "He of the god Seth, beloved of Ptah."

To the Greeks, he was Sethos I, and his throne name was Men-maat-re, meaning "Eternal is the Justice of Re".

He ruled Egypt for 13 years (though some Egyptologists differ on this matter, giving him a reign of between 15 and 20 years) from 1291 through 1278 BC. In order to

rectify the instability under the Amarna kings, he early on set a policy of major building at home and a committed foreign policy.

Seti was the son of Ramesses I and his queen, Sitre. He probably ruled as co-regent, evidenced by an inscription on a statue from Medamud. Seti married into his own military caste. His first wife was Tuya, who was the daughter of a lieutenant of charioteers. His first son died young, but his second son was Ramesses II. There was also a daughter, Tia, and a second daughter named Henutmire, who would become a minor queen of Ramesses II.

This was truly a great period in Egypt, and perhaps the greatest in regards to art and culture. In the building projects that Seti I undertook, the quality of the reliefs and other designs were probably never surpassed by later rulers.

He is responsible for beginning the great Hypostyle Hall in the Temple of Amun at Karnak, which his son Ramesses II later finished. Seti's reliefs are on the north side and their fine style is evident when compared to later additions.



However, at Abydos, he built perhaps the most remarkable temple ever constructed in Egypt. It has seven sanctuaries, dedicated to himself, Ptah, Re-Harakhte, Amun-Re, Osiris, Isis and Horus. Interestingly, in this temple a part called the Hall of Records or sometimes the 'Gallery of Lists', Seti is shown with his son before a long official list of the pharaohs beginning with the earliest times. However, the names of the Amarna pharaohs are omitted, as if they never existed, and the list jumps from Amenhotep III directly to Horemheb.

Behind the temple at Abydos Seti build another remarkable structure known as the Osireion.



Completely underground, originally a long tunnel decorated with painted scenes from the 'Book of Gates' led to a huge hall. This whole structure with a central mound surrounded by canal water was symbolic of the origins of life from the primeval waters. It was here that Seti rested after his death and before being taken to his tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

Other building projects included a small temple at Abydos dedicated to Seti's father, Ramesses I, his own mortuary temple at Thebes, and his best building project of all, his tomb in the Valley of the Kings. This tomb, one of the few actually completed, was without doubt the finest in the Valley of the Kings, as well as the longest and deepest.

Militarily, Seti I led an expedition to Syria as early as his first year as king. This was probably understandable, as he had also led campaigns to Palestine during the last months of his father, Ramesses I's rule. This, and other campaign during his first six years of rule are documented on the outer north and east wall of the great temple of Amun at Karnak. There is also a stele from Beth-Shan, for some time a major Egyptian center in Palestine, that records his early campaign. The attack was up the coast of Gaza, where he secured wells along the main trade route, and then taking the town, before pressing on further north. He took the area up to Tyre before returning to the fortress of Tjel in the north east Delta.

There was a latter attack on Syria and Lebanon where he (and the Egyptians) fought the Hittites for the first time. One scene at Karnak shows the capture of Kadesh, which would also be attacked later by Ramesses II.



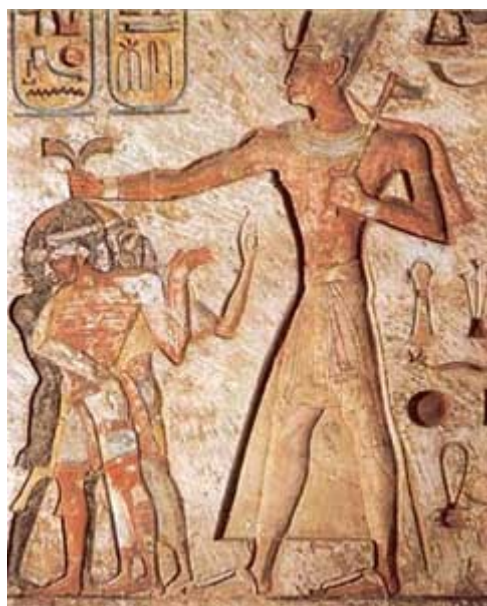
He also fought campaigns against the Libyans of the western desert. We further learn that in year eight of Seti's reign, he had to crush a rebellion in Nubia in the region of Irem, where he carried off over six hundred prisoners. However, apparently this was a minor problem as the campaign only lasted for seven days.

Seti's mummy is said to be the finest of all surviving royal mummies, though it was not found in his tomb. Rather, it was found in the Deir el-Bahari cache in 1881.

Dockets on the mummy show that it had been restored during the reign of the High Priest of Amun, Heribor (1080-1074 BC) and again in year 15 of Smendes (about 1054 BC).

Ramesses II (Usermaatresetepenre) 1279 - 1213 B.C.

Ramesses the Great, the third ruler of Egypt's 19th Dynasty



During 67 year reign, everything was done on a grand scale. No other pharaoh constructed so many temples or erected so many colossal statues and obelisks. No other pharaoh sired so many children. Ramesses' 'victory' over the Hittites at Kadesh was celebrated in one of the most repeated Egyptian texts ever put on record. By the time he died, aged more than 90, he had set his stamp indelibly on the face of Egypt.



It is difficult to tell from most of Ramesses II's statues and depictions on monuments exactly what he looked like physically. This is because the ancient Egyptian artists were not always intent on portraying the king in a totally realistic manner. The king probably never set for specific statues. Rather, they were based upon approved models.

Hence, the official image of Ramesses II promoted by the royal artists is not unlike the ageless portraits we find of the British monarch on stamps or American presidents on currency. His images depict him as a traditional king: tall, dignified, physically perfect and forever young. His many statues and reliefs show his physical characteristics to include a prominent nose set in a rounded face with high cheek bones, wide, arched eyebrows, slightly bulging, almond-shaped eyes, fleshy lips and a small, square chin. He is often portrayed with a regal smile.



We have a better idea of his looks as an old man from his mummy, which has a very prominent, long, thin, hooked nose set in a long, narrow, oval face with a strong jaw. He was large for an ancient Egyptian, standing some five foot seven inches (1.333 meters) tall, and it has been suggested that he shows many Asiatic traits, which might also be recognizable in the mummies of Seti I and Merenptah.

Interestingly, the mummy's gray hair had been died red, and indeed, modern technology has proven that in his youth he was a red head, which was also not a common trait of ancient Egyptians.



The son of Seti I and Queen Tuya was the third king of the 19th Dynasty. Upon the death of Seti I, Nefertari, Ramesses II's chief wife, took on the duties of the queen, while Tuya immediately shed those responsibilities for the influential role of King's Mother. During this period, the function of King's Mother seems to have been

accorded a political role, functioning as her son's advisor. In fact, it may have even fallen on her shoulders to protect the king's interest at home while he was away on foreign campaigns.

In fact, our best recordings of Tuya's life were provided from the period after her husband's death. We know that she was important enough politically to have corresponded with the Hittite court. We find her image in important monuments, such as the facade of her Abu Simbel temple where she appears on the same scale as the other royal women and sons, standing beside the second and fourth colossi. She was also featured in the Ramesseum where she sat in colossal form beside her much larger son in the first courtyard, and along with Nefertari, she shakes her sistrum on the walls of the hypostyle hall.

Her promotion by Ramesses II probably went beyond love, however. A king could gain status from that of his mother, and in fact he set out to rewrite the story of his own miraculous birth so as to provide himself with a divine father. Ramesses had actually been born to his common mother prior to his father ascending the throne. However, Ramesses, always a self promoter, which was not an unusual trait in Egyptian pharaohs, had inscribed a new tale of his birth where he was not only the son of Seti I, but of Amun, the high god himself. To many of those who study ancient Egyptian history, this is of course nothing new, but indeed, he was only the third New Kingdom pharaoh to make such a claim

However, though mothers often outlived their sons in ancient Egypt, because of Ramesses II's extremely long life, Tuya did not. She appears to have died soon after his 22nd year as ruler of Egypt, and was interred in an impressive tomb in the Valley of the Queens (QV80).

Called Ramesses the Great, he lived to be 96 years old, had 200 wives and concubines, 96 sons and 60 daughters.



Nefertari at the large temple at Abu Simbel

The wife of an Egyptian pharaoh is often referred to by Egyptologists as a consort. This is probably due to the fact that in some people's minds, the Egyptian queen was not a wife because of the lack of a specific religious celebration of marriage. There appears to have been marriage contracts, but little in the way of our modern concept of a marriage ceremony. The 'Chief King's Wife' was the closest counterpart of our modern concept of a wife.

Ramesses II's first principle wife (Chief King's Wife), was Nefertari. She had to have probably been of royal blood (though almost certainly not of the immediate royal family). It has been suggested that she may have been a daughter or at least related to King Ay (granddaughter, niece or great-niece), one of the last rulers of the 18th Dynasty. Ramesses II was the first ruler of the 19th Dynasty who, at the time he chose his principle queen, was already destined to rule Egypt. Several of his queens, such as Merit-Amun, were also his daughters.

These queens would have been the top tier in his harem, and some would have remained by his side much of the time (though during different periods of his rule). While the king would have maintained harems all along the Nile Valley in regional locations, with many women who he hardly knew, or knew not at all, these queens would have probably resided near their husband in the main palace harem.

Undoubtedly, Nefertari held some power over Ramesses II. It was probably love, but we cannot say for certain.

There could be only one Chief King's Wife at any one time, and Nefertari held that designation from the beginning. What we do know is that Ramesses II lavished upon

her at least several important monuments, including the small temple at Abu Simbel and her wonderful tomb in the Valley of the Queens.

Yet the many monuments that Ramesses II lavished upon Nefertari cannot simply be attributed to love. There is no question that a revered, respected and occasionally worshipped wife brought nothing but glory to her husband and so these monuments were also meant to honor their builder as well. In fact, within Nefertari's temple at Abu Simbel, it is not she, but rather the image of Ramesses II himself that adorns the inner walls of the sanctuary.

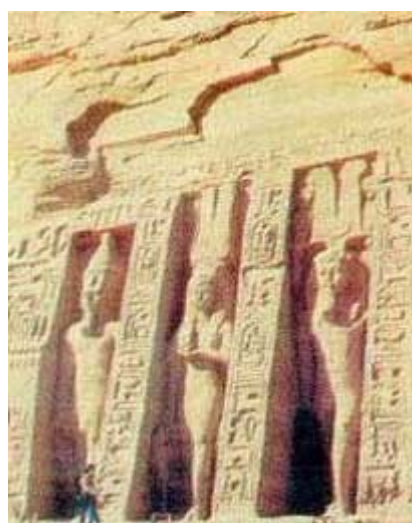
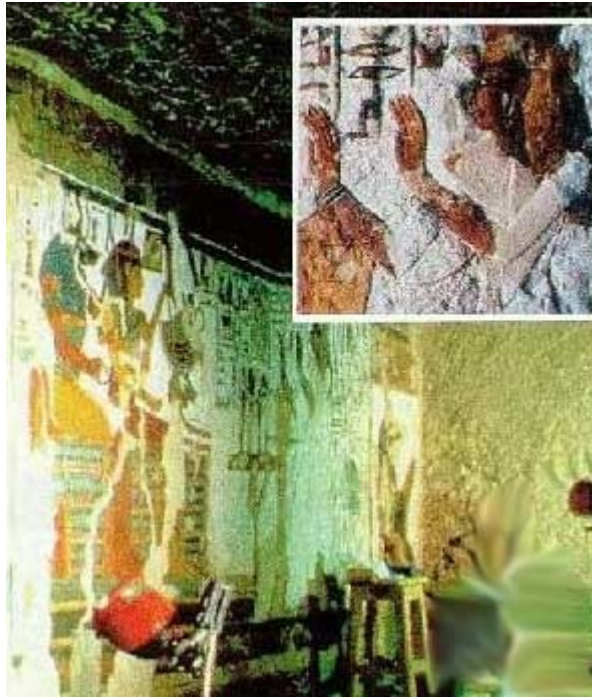
From the very beginning of her husband's reign, Nefertari appears as a dutiful wife, supporting Ramesses on all appropriate ceremonial occasions. She received the two titles, Mistress of the South and North, and Lady of the Two Lands, which parallel Ramesses II's titles.

Regrettably, while we may find any number of monuments, statues and decorations depicting Nefertari, we know precious little about her actual life. We do know that she was not the only one of his queens to be honored in an age when Egyptian kings did not always give outward recognition to their women.

We really do not know for certain who became the Chief King's Wife after Nefertari, but it may well have been one of his daughters. The dynamics these incestuous relationships are largely unknown. In some situations, the father, in this case Ramesses II, married a daughter it would seem as a replacement after the death of her mother. However, at other times the mother and daughter were married to the king at the same time.

Her tomb is the most beautiful and famous of all queens' tombs and the summit of art in Egypt.





Ramesses was named co-ruler with his father, Seti I, early in his life.

He accompanied his father on numerous campaigns in Libya and Nubia. At the age of 22 Ramesses went on a campaign in Nubia with two of his own sons. Seti I and Ramesses built a palace in Avaris where Ramesses I had started a new capital.

When Seti I died in 1290 B.C., Ramesses assumed the throne and began a series of wars against the Syrians. The famous Battle of Kadesh is inscribed on the walls of Ramesses temple.

Ramesses' building accomplishments are two temples at Abu Simbel, the hypostyle hall at Karnak, a mortuary complex at Abydos, the Colossus of Ramesses at Memphis, a vast tomb at Thebes, additions at the Luxor Temple, and the famous Ramesseum. Among Ramesses' wives were Nefertari, Queen Istnofret, his two daughters, Binthanath and Merytamon, and the Hittite princess, Maathornefrure.

Ramesses was originally buried in his tomb in the Valley of the Kings. Because of the widespread looting of tombs during the 21st Dynasty the priests removed Ramesses body and took it to a holding area where the valuable materials such, as gold-leaf and semi-precious inlays, were removed. The body was then rewrapped and taken to the tomb of an 18th Dynasty queen, Inhapi.

The bodies of Ramesses I and Seti I were done in like fashion and all ended up at the same place. Amenhotep I's body had been placed there as well at an earlier time. Seventy-two hours later, all of the bodies were again moved, this time to the Royal Cache that was inside the tomb of High Priest Pinudjem II. The priests documented all of this on the linen that covered the bodies. This is systematic looting by the priests was done in the guise of protecting the bodies from the "common" thieves.

Ramesses was followed to the throne by his thirteenth son, with his queen Istnofret, Merenptah.

Due to a fortunate combination of circumstances, including optimal Nile floods resulting in good harvests, international stability, a large family and of course, the extraordinary longevity which caused Ramesses to outlive not only his contemporaries, but many of his children and grandchildren, Egypt enjoyed a continuity of government that was the envy of the ancient world. Whether by luck, or good kingship, Egypt flourished under Ramesses II and her people were grateful.

Within his lifetime, Ramesses II was venerated as a god, particularly in Nubia. This cult following continued to flourish, even after the end of Egypt's pharaonic period. Unlike many Egyptian kings, who always sought to have their name remembered and repeated so that their soul could live on, the Egyptians continued to make pilgrimages to Abydos, Memphis, Tanis and Abu Simbel in order to make offerings to Ramesses the deity for centuries after his death. During the Graeco-Roman period, in order to elevate the status of a god named Khons, the priests literally rewrote their mythology to allow Ramesses II a starring role alongside the deity.

Ramesses II's reputation resulted in an amazing following, and even a period of Egyptian history we often refer to as the Ramesside period. During the 20th Dynasty, though not descendents, all but one of the kings took the name Ramesses in their efforts to emulate him. Unfortunately, only one of the kings, Ramesses III, would

come anywhere close to Ramesses II's achievements, and in the end, this much weakened era would spell the end of the New Kingdom. Later still, the weak dynasty of Tanite kings who only had a tenuous grip on Upper Egypt also attempted to recapture some of the lost brilliance of Egypt's golden age by choosing to use Ramesses II's throne name, Usermaatre, as their own.

Hence, Ramesses II's name lived on. In 1822, when we first began to decipher the ancient Egyptian language, many new pharaohs became known to us, and later, as new tombs were discovered, along with other documents, we began to piece together a long line of rulers. Only then did we know the names of Egyptian kings and queens such as Hatshepsut, Akhenaten and Tutankhamun. However, Ramesses II was never in need of rediscovery, for his name, perhaps corrupted somewhat, was not forgotten.

Even in our modern world, he has also been remembered, though often not very realistically. He was the handsome, courageous and good hearted king of Christian Jacq's Egyptian novels, and a more lonely, complicated man in Anne Rice's "The Mummy". On the silver screen, he was introduced in the 1909 film, "Mummy of the King Ramses, and in 1923, became the great pharaoh of Cecil B DeMille's silent screen epic, "The Ten Commandments".

Afterwards, Yul Brynner would become Ramesses in DeMille's more famous 1956 movie by the same name, and just recently, he was not very accurately portrayed in the DreamWorks animated interpretation of the Exodus called the "Prince of Egypt".

The great king was given the birth name of his grandfather, Re-mise, or Ramesses I (meryamun), which means, "Re has Fashioned Him, Beloved of Amun." We often find his birth name spelled as Ramses. We may find many variations of his name throughout classical history. Ramesses fame was not limited to Egypt, for he was known throughout the ancient classical world, due perhaps to a highly efficient royal propaganda machine. From the Christian bible we hear of both Ramesses, as well as his capital city of Pi-Ramesses.

Manetho, a famous ancient Egyptian historian, included Ramesses II in his Egyptian chronology as Ramesses Miamun, or Rapsakes.

The Greek historian, Herodotus, refers to him as King Rhampsinitus.

Writing in 60 BC, Diodorus Siculus, who was especially impressed by the monument we today call the Ramesseum, the mortuary temple of Ramesses II on the West Bank at Thebes, knew him as Ozymandias, which is an obvious corruption of the king's pre-noimen, Usermaatre. Pliny and Tacitus would later write about him, calling him King Rhamsesis or Rhamses, and two thousand years later, in 1817, Percy Bysshe Shelley published Ozymandias, a poem giving his impression of the once mighty Ramesses:

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And Wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read

Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed:
And on the pedestal these words appear: My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair! Nothing besides remains. Round the
decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

Prior to our modern discipline of Egyptology, the Pharaoh Ramesses II became legendary becoming a fabled king not unlike England's (Celtic) King Arthur. Like that king, an ill defined combination of real kings grew about his person, combining perhaps the deeds of the 12th Dynasty Kings Senusret I and III with those of Ramesses II under the general umbrella of Sesoths.

Yet, it was not until after Jean Francois Champollion decoded the Hieroglyphics of the Rosetta Stone that the immensity of Ramesses II's monumental building works could be appreciated by modern observers. Now, the real king became famous all over again, and not only among Egyptologists, though they certainly began to study Ramesses the Great with a new fervor. Because of the number of his monuments, he seems to have constantly been in the news, as discovery after discovery turned up bearing his name.

Modern thought on Ramesses undulates from scholar to scholar, and depending on what role is discussed. However, somewhat of a consensus among Egyptologists seems to be that Ramesses II simply did what Egyptian pharaohs were suppose to do, though he had a longer period of time than average to do so. Essentially, Ramesses II is believed to have been a very traditional king in many respects, who followed in the footsteps of his predecessors.

Ideally, an Egyptian pharaoh was simply a link in a long chain of custodians who's ill defined but well understood role passed from king to king. He was the mortal link with the gods upon who's shoulders rested the responsibility of maintaining Ma'at in Egypt, and to some extent throughout the known world. Ma'at might be defined as "truth", but might be better explained as a continuity of "rightness" which could insure that things would continue to function normally. If Ma'at were in balance, there would be reasonable Nile inundations (floods) which would nourish the soil and produce good harvests, victory in battle and there would not be illness in the land. Ma'at was mostly obtained by pleasing the gods, which involved supporting their cults as well as following a righteous path. And among other requirements such as making offerings, participating in festivals and protecting the sacred land of Egypt, pleasing the gods often involved building temples and supporting their priesthood.

Of course, there would be little need for a king to actually promote himself in order to fulfill these duties. Yet, despite the belief by the ancient Egyptians that the King was at least semi-divine, they were, as we now know, all too human.

Almost every Egyptian pharaoh seems to have felt a need to prove himself to his people (as well as to the gods). In fact, they wanted to prove themselves superior to their predecessors, and yet, at the same time, many of these kings actually suffered

considerable self doubt, particularly when they were not born to a long dynasty of kings and also not to a "Great Wife" of the king, as was the case with Ramesses II.



Therefore, they exerted considerable efforts to build monuments and grand statues in order to re-enforce their role as a living god, as well as to defeat the enemies of Egypt in battle and in each case, they ensured that their name and titles were celebrated in connection with these deeds.

Furthermore, they often exaggerated every possible deed, even to the point of fabricating war victories and usurping the monuments and statues of their predecessors.

Ramesses II was not the first, nor the last to follow such practices. He was certainly an avid builder, erecting temples and statues from one end of the Nile Valley to the other. And even when he may have failed in war, he nevertheless made it a victory by inscribing it as such on his monuments.

So in reality, regardless of our modern misgivings about Ramesses II, as a king of Egypt's New Kingdom, Ramesses fulfilled his functions, as he was basically expected to, and in return, Ma'at seems, at least to his ancient Egyptian subjects, to have been fulfilled, for the country experienced a long period of prosperity during his equally long reign.

Merenptah (Baenrehotepharmaat) 1213 - 1203 BC



By the time Ramesses II died, he had apparently outlived twelve of his sons. His 13th son, Merenptah ascended the throne of Egypt. Merenptah was old himself by this time, probably nearly sixty years old, and his reign was rather dull, as well as short lived (perhaps only nine or ten years) in comparison with that of his father's reign. According to the Oxford History of Ancient Egypt, he ruled from 1213 until 1203 BC.

Merenptah (also hetep-her-maat, and commonly also called Merneptah) was the king's birth name, meaning "Beloved of Ptah, Joyous is Truth).

His throne name was Ba-en-re Mery-netjeru, which means "The Soul of Re, Beloved of the Gods".

Merenptah was probably the fourth child of Ramesses II's second principle wife, Istnofret (Isisnofret).

He was married to queens Istnofret (Isisnofret), who must have surely been his sister, and possibly a queen Takhat. His son was Seti-Merenptah, who probably ascended the throne sometime after his father as Seti II.

However, Seti II's reign may have been initially usurped by a Amenmesse who may have been a son of Takhat, though Takhat's marriage to Merenptah is far from certain.

Merenptah is almost completely unknown until the 40th year of Ramesses II's reign. In fact he may have been heir to the throne of Egypt for about twelve years prior to Ramesses II's death, but in Ramesses II's year 40, we known the prince was made General of the Army.

Perhaps it is not surprising that what we know of Merenptah's rule is mostly about his military activities. However, he appears not to have become the heir to the throne until Ramesses II's 55th regnal year, when Ramesses II was celebrating his 80th birthday, and Merenptah his 48th. In fact, in the last decade of Ramesses II's life,

Merenptah was probably the real power behind the throne, as Ramesses II was well advanced in age.

In fact, he is mainly attested to by three great inscriptions, including 80 lines on a wall in the Temple of Amun at Karnak, a large stele with 35 readable lines from Athribis in the Delta and the great Victory Stele from his ruined mortuary temple at Thebes, with 28 lines.

All of these text refer to his military campaigns.

The Victory Stele is unique. It was usurped by Merenptah from the mortuary temple of Amenhotep III at Thebes, and is dated to the third day of the third month of the third season so it may have been written around the summer of 1207. In it, Merenptah lists enemy conquests, but the most interesting reference is a very rare mention of Israel. It may be the oldest non biblical reference to that country. Because of this, Merenptah has often been thought to be the pharaoh of the Exodus, though modern opinion leans against such an identification.

Merenptah apparently did face a number of military problems. These included a "flash" revolt in Syria, which was quickly crushed. There were also problems on Egypt's western borders involving the southern Libyans and the Sea People, who apparently had silently infiltrated the Delta, and around year five of Merenptah's rule, attempted an invasion.

However, with rapid mobilization of his forces and a pre-emptive strike, Merenptah was able to vanquish these enemies, apparently slaughtering many of them. Also, the Libyans apparently inspired the Nubians to the south to also revolt, but Merenptah's quick response to the Libyans allowed him to immediately turn south and inflict a crushing blow on those rebels as well.

However, Merenptah did attempt to maintain the peaceful relations of his father. The Hittite King in Syria faced a possible invasion from the north and widespread famine, so under the term of the treaty they had made with Ramesses II, they requested assistance from Merenptah, who provided them with much needed grain.

One interesting facet to Merenptah's reign was that he moved the administrative center for Egypt from Piramesse (Pi-Ramesse), his fathers capital, back to Memphis, where he constructed a royal palace next to the temple of Ptah. This palace was excavated in 1915 by the University of Pennsylvania Museum led by Clarence Fischer, and yielded fine architectural elements.

Merenptah's tomb is number KV 8 located in the Valley of the Kings on the West Bank of Luxor (ancient Thebes). The king probably died around 1202 BC, but his mummy was not found within his tomb. In the 19th century, this apparently added to the speculation about him being the Pharaoh of the Exodus, since that king's body would have probably been washed away in the Red Sea. However, that theory was confounded when, in 1898, his mummy was discovered among 18 others in the mummy cache discovered in the tomb of Amenhotep II (KV 35).

He also built a mortuary temple that lies behind the Colossi of Memnon on the West Bank at Luxor. Much of it was built with stone robbed from the mortuary temple of Amenhotep III. The structure is currently being studied by Horst Jartz with the Swiss Institute in Cairo. Reports indicate that some of the fragments discovered include well preserved reliefs, perhaps some of the finest to be found in any temple at Thebes. T

In addition to his tomb and temple we also know that he added to the Osireion at Abydos and also built at Dendera. Merenptah is further attested to by a "wall stele" at Amada, four almost identical stele from Nubia (at Amada, Amarah West, Wadi Seba, Aksha), blocks from Elephantine, a decree from West Silsila, an inscription in the small temple of Medinet Habu, stele from Kom el-Ahmar and Hermopolis (along with other inscriptions), a victory column at Heliopolis, and several monument remains at Piramesse.

Amenmesse (Menmire) 1203 - 1200 B.C.



Amenmesses is generally considered to be the 5th ruler of Egypt's 19th Dynasty, though most Egyptologists believe he was probably not the legitimate heir to the throne. He succeeded Merneptah as pharaoh, but it was probably Merneptah's son, prince Seti-Merneptah who should have ascended the throne on his father's death.

Various theories exist about why he did not. It is very possible that Merenptah may have died suddenly while the crown prince was away, and Amenmesses simply took advantage of the situation. Interesting, but not unpredictable, is that this disorder came only a generation after the strong, but long rule of Ramesses II (Ramesses the Great).

However, it is also very likely that Seti-Merneptah was no other than Seti II, who ruled Egypt just after Amenmesses. It was probably Seti II who scraped the images and inscriptions from that king's monuments, and otherwise usurped Amenmesses' building projects. Therefore, very little is known about this king, who apparently ruled for three or four years. Various Egyptologists give him a reign from between 1202 - 1199 BC and 1203 - 1200 BC.

Amenmesses would have been his birth name, but a Greek version. Manetho called him Ammenemes and assigned five years to his rule, though we may also find him named as Amenmeses. His Egyptian name was probably Heqa-waset, which means "Fashioned by Amun, Ruler of Thebes".

His throne name was Men-mi-re Setep-en-re, meaning "Eternal like Re, Chosen by Re."

It was long believed that Amenmesses was a son of Merneptah by a queen Takhat, though really his origins are unknown, and that he probably married a woman named Baktwerel. However, some Egyptologists have suggested that Takhat and Baktwerel were actually the mother and wife of Ramesses IX.

Originally, his parentage was based on the fact that there were scenes and inscriptions related to these two women in Amenmesses tomb, but recent excavations seem to indicate that the tomb, originally meant for Amenmesses was actually usurped for these women. If so, this would probably negate any argument of them being his mother and wife.

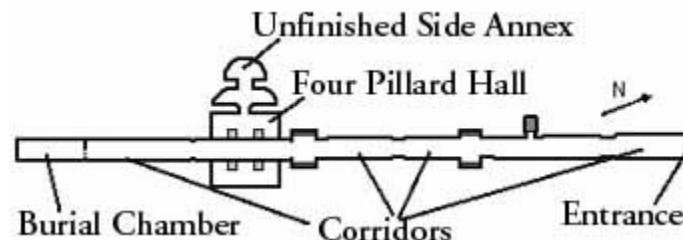


There is enough confusion surrounding Amenmesses that some Egyptologists actually place his rule after that of Seti II. Yet, Seti II's name has been written over the name of Amenmesses in several Theban locations, it is generally believed that Seti II succeeded him. Still others believe that Amenmesses usurped Seti II in the middle of Seti II's reign, sometime between years three and five of his rule, which would seem more probable than him ruling after Seti II. It is also possible that Amenmesses only ruled the southern parts of Egypt during Seti II's reign.

If this is true, he may have been a vizier over Nubia named Messui during the time of Merneptah, but this theory has recently been called into question. There has even been speculation that a queen Ti'a, supposed mother of Saptah, the penultimate ruler of the dynasty, may have been a wife of Amenmeses, thus making him the father of the successor to Sety II as part of a rival dynastic branch.

It should also be noted that Amenmesses usurped a number of preexisting monuments himself, and though we now believe that tomb KV 10 in the Valley of the Kings was originally begun by this king, little other building work exists. Inscriptions bearing his name are mostly only found in Upper Egyptian sites, primarily in the Theban region and in Nubia. These include inscriptions at Karnak, a dedication inscription at the small temple at Medinet Habu, an inscriptions at a chapel at Deir el-Medine and a stela found at Buhen.

Perhaps as many as six quartzite statues originally placed along the axis of the hypostyle hall in the Amun Temple at Karnak are thought to be his, though these were also usurped (in the name of Seti II). However, one of these statues thought to belong to Amenmesses has an inscription bearing the title, "the Great Royal Wife". Takhat, lending support to the argument that she actually was his wife. Amenmesses was also, among others, responsible for restoration work on a barque shrine dating from Tuthmosis III that stands before a small temple at Tod.



The Tomb of Amenmesses (KV 10)

Amenmesses' tomb cannot be visited as it is being excavated, and unless some sort of amazing recovery process is discovered, it may never be a popular tourist attraction. The tomb, located in the Valley of the Kings on the West Bank at Luxor (ancient Thebes) is mostly incomplete, and much of its decorations have been destroyed.

The tomb has been known since antiquity, and there are signs that it has been visited from classical times. Pococke noted it on his map of the area in 1743 and it was examined by Burton and Hays, Champollion, Lepsius and Wilkinson during the early 19th century. The decorations of the tomb were mostly recorded and published by Edgene Lefebure in 1883. In the excavation season of 1907 Edward Ayrton used the tomb's corridor as a dinning or work room.

However, full scale investigation of the tomb is currently underway by Otto Schaden as a project of the University of Arizona and the University of Memphis. There is little doubt that the results will shed light on this dim corner of Egyptian history. It would seem though, at the moment, that we still do not know whether Amenmesses was ever interred here, or the actual relationship he might have had with Takhat and Baketwerel, for whom part of the tomb was redecorated.

The tomb is a fairly simple affair, and as stated, unfinished. Three descending corridors lead down to a room where the ritual shaft was to be dug, but never was. Within these corridors, we find scenes of king Amenmesses (destroyed) before Re-Horakhty, passages (scenes) from the ['Litany of Re'](#) the ['Amduat'](#) and in the well room, a scene of Takhat making offerings before deities.

After the shaft room, where the tomb becomes level, is the first four pillared hall, with several more scenes. They include Baketwerel making offerings before the gods, and scenes from the 'Book of the Dead'.

To the west of the four pillared hall is an unfinished annex. The ceiling of this chamber has been penetrated by the tomb of Ramesses III (KV 11). The original decorative program of the tomb never reached beyond the four pillared hall, though up to that point it was almost identical to that found in the tomb of Merenptah (KV 8). Later, the outer corridors, shaft room and four pillared hall were plastered over and redecorated for Takhat and Baketwere, who we know were royal women. We just do not know their exact position in regards to their son and husband, because the redecoration calls into question their relationship to Amenmesses. Some of this later decoration has fallen off, so that now we find some of the original and some of the later decorations.

After the four pillared hall there is another corridor leading to the burial chamber. However, the burial chamber is in reality another corridor that was adapted as for this purpose.

There were three mummies found within the tomb including those of two women and a man. They have never been identified.

However, fragments of canopic jars and part of a red granite sarcophagus lid, usurped itself from someone named Anketemheb, both inscribed with the name of Takhat, probably indicate that at least she was buried here, so one of the mummies may be hers. Little else has been found (and at least reported at this time). Much of what was found within the tomb was actually intrusive, including fragmentary shabti figures from Seti I, sarcophagus fragments of Ramesses VI and a few other items.

Seti II (Userkheperuresetepenre) 1200 - 1194 B.C.



Seti II was probably the fifth or sixth king of Egypt's 19th Dynasty, depending on the treatment we give Amenmesses who may have ruled before, concurrently or even

after him (though that is less likely). Seti (mer-en-ptah) was this king's birth name, meaning "He of the god Seti, Beloved of Ptah". He is also sometimes referred to by his Greek name, Sethos II. His throne name was User-kheperu-re Setep-en-re, meaning "Powerful are the Manifestations of Re, Chosen of Re".

It was not unusual in ancient Egypt for the successful, long reign of a king to be followed by succession problems. Of course, few kings had a longer, more successful reign than Ramesses II, and when he died, he left a son who was now old himself as the new King. This was Merneptah, who was almost certainly the father of Seti II. It is believed that an usurper named Amenemesses probably ruled either before him, or concurrently with Seti II during the early part of his rule. It may have been Amenemesses who erased the name of Seti II in his tomb and elsewhere, but it was likewise Seti II who probably did likewise to the names and images of Amenemesses after taking complete control of Egypt. It is believed that Seti may have only reigned for about six years, from about 1199 until 1193 BC.



Seti II took at least three wives, consisting of Takhat II, Tausret and Tiaa. Tausret apparently was the mother of his oldest son and heir named Seti-Merenptah, but that child did not live to inherit the throne. Instead, it was Siptah, a younger son who replaced the king, though probably only as a child under Tausret's regency even though his mother is considered to have been Queen Tiaa. In fact, Tausret appears to have outlived this young king, taking full possession of the throne herself with full royal titles much as Hatshepsut had done some 300 years earlier.

Seti II's reign was apparently relatively peaceful. We have no evidence of foreign policy during his reign, though there was probably activity at the mines around Serabit el-Khadim in the Sinai. He made a number of claims regarding building projects, though there is little indication that his words translate into physical accomplishments. We find surviving trances of his work at Hermopolis, where he apparently finished some decorations in his grandfather's, Ramesses II, temple. He

also did some work in Karnak, where he was probably responsible for a new way station of the sacred barks in the First Court of the temple of Amun-Re, and he probably also completed some work in the temple of Mut.

KV15, the Tomb of Seti II

KV15, the tomb of Seti II, has been known since antiquity and must have lied open during most of the classical period, judging from the 59 Greek and Latin graffiti found on its walls.

The tomb was investigated superficially by Pococke, along with others who followed after him.



However, it was Howard Carter who cleared most of the tomb between 1903 and 1904, though apparently the ritual well was never excavated. One may find the entrance to KV15, rather than having steps cut below a retaining wall, directly quarried into the base of an almost vertical cliff face at the head of the wadi running south west from the main Valley of the Kings on the West Bank at Luxor (ancient Thebes).

However, at present the tomb has been temporarily closed to allow the installation of new flooring, hand rails and lighting. It is expected to soon.



The history of the tomb is really unknown at this time. It is very likely that Seti II may have originally been buried with his wife, Tausret, in her tomb and later moved to this tomb which appears to have been hastily and incompletely finished, by Sethnakht (Setakht). In fact, the tomb may have originally been started for Seti II but the work interrupted at some point. This may have had to do with the reign of Amenmeses, if that king ruled concurrently with Seti II rather than before him. It appears that within the tomb, Seti's name was carved, erased, and then carved out once again. The erasure may be attributable to Amenmeses, or possibly to Saptah. It has been suggested that his wife Tausert then had her husband's name restored.

The tomb, which takes a Northwest to Southeast axis, consists of a short entryway corridor followed by three long corridors in turn followed by a well room. The well room then communicates with a four pillared hall and then a makeshift burial chamber, formed from what would have been another corridor, where the king's sarcophagus was located.

This tomb is literally a straight shot leading 75.38 meters into the cliff face with only a mild descent for the most part leading about 6.53 meters deep, and with no lateral rooms. However, a rectangular niche on the right side of the pillared hall may mark the location where the usual annex would have been cut. Missing also is the high trapezoidal niches often found at the beginning of the third corridor.

Much of the painted decoration is intact and the plaster appears to be relatively stable. None of the well-preserved relief was ever painted. Breaks in the surface of the walls have recently been filled in by Antiquities Inspectorate restorers. Due to the hurried completion of the tomb, decorations in clearly take two forms. While those in the initial part of the tomb are well formed using both sunk and raised reliefs, they give way to less accomplished work executed in paint only deeper within the tomb, with the four pillared hall being the only exception. There, the decorations again revert to sunk reliefs, though paint was not always applied. In some of the deepest corridors, only preliminary sketches were made on the plaster surface. Throughout the tomb, even including the first corridor where we find the raised and sunk reliefs, there are stylistic differences within the craftsmanship of the work that might suggest the use of different artisans.

While the tomb may have been unfinished, unusually, the walls of the entrance were carefully smoothed and covered with a layer of white plaster, as elsewhere within the tomb. However, no decorative theme was applied to the entrance and entrance corridor walls.



However, in the next, longer corridor (Corridor One) on the doorway lintel is depicted the kneeling goddesses Isis and Nephthys, and between them a sun disk with a scarab and a ram headed god. Inscribed on the jambs of the doorway are the names of Seti II with an image of Ma'at, also shown kneeling. Within this corridor, are depictions of Seti II making offerings to Re-Horakhty and offering vases to Nefertem followed by the initial passages of the Litany of Re on the east wall. The scene of Seti II and Nefertem were cut over the original opening vignette of the Litany of Ray which was then reinscribed further down the corridor. On the west wall are scenes of Sokar and Seti II making offerings of incense and libations to Re-Horakhty.

The remainder of the corridor continues with the texts of the Litany of Re. On the ceiling of this corridor we find painted flying vultures, some with the head of a cobra and not completely painted. Between the vultures the king's name is inscribed, and along the edges of the ceiling are texts relating to Osiris and Re-Horakhty. The scenes on the next two corridors are oriented towards the rear of the tomb on the eastern walls, while on the west they run towards the tomb's entrance.



Over the outer lintel of the second corridor is found a winged disk, while on the doorjambs the Litany of Re is continued. On the walls within this corridor, the decorative theme is executed in red, preliminary sketches only. On the east wall we find Seti II making offerings to Re-Horakhty, while on the west wall he makes an offering to Sokar.

The remainder of this corridor continues with sections of the Litany of Re, including the 75 forms of the sun god. Further on, we also find the second and third hours of the Amduat on both the east and west walls. In this corridor, the ceiling once again portrays Isis and Nephthys, this time as kites, on either side of a sun disk containing the ram headed bird representing the ba (soul) of Re. This scene is followed by more text from the Litany of Re. Stars were to have filled the remainder of the ceiling, but were never completely rendered.

The outer lintel of the third corridor is decorated with a winged disk, while on the door jams we find the names and a depiction of Seti II. Within this corridor, the east wall is inscribed with representations from the fourth hour of the Amduat, while the west wall depicts the fifth hour.

Within the well room (ritual shaft) the niches at the entrance are, for the first time, fully cut. Here, an innovation is the depiction of various divine statues, many imitations of actual wooden figures similar to those found in the tomb of Tutankhamun.



Double scene of Seti II making

Normally we would find the depiction of protective deities such as the Four Sons of Horus and the related goddesses, but for unexplained reasons these figures have been omitted.

The walls within the four pillared chamber are rendered with the fourth and fifth divisions of the Book of Gates. On the rear wall is a double scene of Seti II offering an image of Ma'at and two vases to Osiris. Here, the pillars depict Seti II, Horus -Iwn-mutef, Ptah, who is in a shrine, along with other deities. The innovative decorations on the pillars, which have only one figure on each side and two adjacent sides forming a "scene, was a development used consistently from this time forward.



Scenes from within the Well Room

The walls within the four pillared chamber are rendered with the fourth and fifth divisions of the Book of Gates. On the rear wall is a double scene of Seti II offering an image of Ma'at and two vases to Osiris. Here, the pillars depict Seti II, Horus-Iwn-mutef, Ptah, who is in a shrine, along with other deities. The innovative decorations on the pillars, which have only one figure on each side and two adjacent sides forming a "scene, was a development used consistently from this time forward.

Finally, in the makeshift burial chamber are several registers. The upper of these contain images of Anubis the jackal on a shrine and two rows of deities representing the followers of Re and Osiris. On the lower registers are scenes of mummified figures on snake style beds representing the fifth division of the Book of Gates. Along the length of the ceiling is Nut, with down swept wings, and above her head perhaps the remains of depictions of ba of Re.



It seems they bought in the body before the tomb was finished and then went on working - a large figure of a Deity with outspread wings painted on the ceiling of above the sarcophagus - very rough. Some beautifully drawn figures of the king in red lines.

Not much in the way of funerary equipment was discovered within this tomb, and the body of Seti II had been removed during antiquity to the tomb of Amenhotep II (KV35), along with the mummies of other royalty, for safe keeping. Fragments of his red granite sarcophagus lid were present within this tomb, but no trace of the actual box was ever discovered. These fragments remain in the tomb, and have been restored and placed on supports so as to suggest the original appearance of the sarcophagus.

On the top of this sarcophagus is an Osirian depiction of Seti II, while the goddess Nut stretches across the reverse side. Unfortunately, the top of the lid is missing, along with the face of the king. However, the head of the goddess Nut is now in the Egyptian collection at the Louvre in Paris. Because this is the smallest of any New Kingdom sarcophagus ever discovered, it has been suggested by Aidan Dodson that it might in fact have been meant to nest within a larger sarcophagus, similar to that of Ramesses III.

Siptah (Akhenresetepenre) 1194 - 1188 B.C.



Siptah (mer-en-ptah), who's name means "Son of Ptah, Beloved of Ptah. His throne name was Akh-en-re Setep-en-re, meaning Beautiful for Re, Chosen by Re. Apparently he was not very chosen, for he suffered the deformity of a club foot. His reign lasted from about 1193 until 1187 BC.

Like his father we know precious little about Siptah, though perhaps, there is little for us to know. He was probably the seventh ruler of Egypt's 19th Dynasty, though in fact he may have never actually ruled at all. He was questionably the second son of Seti II, by Tiaa, a relatively minor queen, and came to the throne because his older brother, Seti-Merenptah, died prior to the death of Seti II. However, he apparently inherited the throne while still a minor and it was his stepmother, Tausret, along with her Chancellor ("kingmaker" Bay) who actually controlled Egypt during the king's short life. Siptah seems to have died in the 6th year of his reign, after which his stepmother took full royal titles.

Like his father, or perhaps even because of his father, his tomb was entered shortly after his death and his cartouches were erased, though they were subsequently restored, possibly by Chancellor Bay but that is by no means proven.



Siptah's deformed feet

Besides his tomb number KV47 in the Valley of the Kings, Siptah is also attested to by the Bilgar stele, the burial of an Apis bull dated to the king, and an inscription at Buhen.

KV47, the Tomb of Siptah

KV47 was discovered by Edward Ayrton on December 18th, 1905 while working for Theodore Davis. However, he noted that the debris in the entrance had been partially dug out, creating a passage that subsequently filled back up. In addition, he felt, because of the bad condition of the rock, that the likelihood of finding anything of interest would be slim. Therefore, he only excavated partially down to the antechamber. Later, beginning in 1912, Harry Burton excavated the tomb for Davis, mostly working between the four pillared chamber and up to and including the the burial chamber.



Yet the tomb was never really completely cleared until 1994. In addition, Howard Carter cleared the area around the tomb in 1922, discovering a few objects belonging to this tomb.

In the summer of 1994, the local Antiquities Inspectorate cleared what Burton left behind, as well as performing restoration and repair work so that the tomb could be opened for tourists. This work included cleaning and repairing reliefs, filling in gaps with plaster, fixing damaged doorways and the lintels in several chambers, as well as replacing substantially damaged pillars with limestone blocks. They laid down wood floors for walkways, and erected glass panels over painted decorations, and also installed a lighting system.

From these excavations it would appear that Siptah and possibly his mother, Queen Tiaa, a minor wife of Seti II, were both originally buried in the tomb. The evidence suggesting his mother was also buried in this tomb mostly consists of fragmentary calcite canopic equipment, along with a model coffin inscribed with the name of Tiaa and several ostraca found by Carter.



The top of Siptah's Sarcophagus

The tomb is found on the north face of a hill that divides the southeast and southwest branches of the central wadi within the Valley of the Kings on the West Bank at Luxor (ancient Thebes). It is oriented north-south running fairly straight for a distance of 114.04 meters into the hill, reaching a depth of about 13.12 meters.



Though the first part of this tomb structure closely follows that of his father, Seti II, the rear sections are somewhat unusual. The initial opening corridor leading into the tomb is in the open air, and consists of a central ramp with two stairways of cut stone blocks imbedded into the bedrock to either side of the ramp. The first true corridor descends, leading to a second level corridor. Here, we find a pair of beam slots used for lowering the sarcophagus. This corridor gives way to a third corridor that, like the first, descends once more. At the rear of this corridor are a pair of rectangular niches. Afterwards, we find the well room that lacks a shaft, followed by a four pillared chamber. The tomb continues through the pillared chamber with a descending passage that leads into the first of two more level corridors before communicating with an antechamber. Normally, we might expect to find a corridor followed by a stairway before the antechamber.

A final wider corridor leads past two abandoned lateral corridors before giving way into the unfinished, transverse burial chamber. Here, a granite sarcophagus is set into an roughly finished rectangular niche in the floor just behind a transverse row of four pillars. The abandoned lateral corridors may have been meant to give into a burial chamber or storage annexes, but this work was stopped after the a corridor broke into the nearby tomb, KV32. The openings were then sealed with limestone slabs.

Do to successive floods, no decorations remain beyond the first four pillared chamber, and little exist beyond the second, level corridor. In addition, this tomb also suffered the fate of KV15, having the cartouches of the tomb owner removed, and later re-carved. However, here, we have little idea who originally destroyed the cartouches, or for that matter, who later restored them, though the process probably revolved around the rivalry of Ramesses II's descendents and their quest for the throne after the death of Merenptah



On the lintel above the doorway to the first true corridor we find the usual scene depicting a scarab and ram headed god flanked by Isis and Nephthys. On the outer thickness and reveals of the door jambs are found the name of the deceased king, along with inscribed prayers to the sun god and Osiris. On the inner thickness of the door jambs is a depiction of the goddess Ma'at, winged and kneeling on baskets supported by the heraldic plants of Upper and Lower Egypt.

Inside this corridor on the northeast wall is a fairly well preserved depiction of Siptah addressing Re-Horakhty followed by the opening lines of the Litany of Re. Further text and scenes from these passages, including a scene of Anubis before the bier of Osiris, fill the remainder of this wall, the opposite wall, and then flow into the next corridor. On the ceiling of this first corridor we also find representations of a series of flying vultures.



Siptah before Re-Horakhty from the Litany of Re

Within the next (second), level corridor, along with the text from the Litany of Re, are found the 74 forms of Re giving way to two scenes from spell 151 of the Book of the Dead. On the ceiling of this corridor is found the best preserved depiction of Isis and Nephthys as kites to either side of the soul of Re.



Anubis from the tomb of Siptah

Beyond this, mostly only traces of decorations exist. For example, on the inner thickness of the door jamb into the next descending passage appears the winged figure of Ma'at, but few details are visible. Only fragmentary painted plaster reveal that the forth and fifth hours of the Amduat were once painted upon this corridor's walls.



After the well room on the back wall of the four pillared chamber, we can just barely make out a fragment of plaster that once portrayed the god Osiris in a shrine. This was probably once a double scene of Siptah making offerings to the god of the underworld, as found in other tombs in the Valley. While no other decorations survive in this tomb, there are a few red painted mason's guidelines indicating a doorway that was never cut into the west wall of the pillared chamber. It would have probably led to an annex.

In addition, we may also make out four pairs of vertical red lines that would have marked the location for a second row of pillars within the burial chamber.



Burial Chamber and Sarcophagus

The only material item of funerary equipment found within KV47 was the red granite outer sarcophagus of Siptah. It is shaped like a cartouche, with the image of the king carved into the upper surface of the lid. He is flanked by figures of Isis and Nephthys and surrounded by a crocodile, a snake and a pair of cobras with human heads and arms. The sarcophagus box is decorated with alternating triple khekher-ornaments and recumbent jackals surmounting a register of underworld demons. This was a new

composition that subsequently was used by other kings on their sarcophagi through the reign of Ramesses VI. Interestingly, there was no destruction of Siptah's name on his sarcophagus.

Otherwise, only fragmentary funerary equipment was discovered, including a calcite inner mummiform sarcophagus decorated with passages from the Book of Gates and the Amduat, along with calcite canopic equipment for Siptah and his mother, calcite shabtis figures for Siptah, and possibly a sarcophagus for queen Tiaa. All of these calcite fragments are now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in the New York.

Burton discovered bones within Siptah's sarcophagus, but it is now believed that this was an intrusive burial, probably of the Third Intermediate Period. In fact, Siptah's mummy has been identified as one of those moved to the cache in tomb KV35 belonging to Amenhotep II.

Queen Tausert (Sitremeritamun) - 1185-1187 B. C.



As one of the few queens who ruled Egypt as Pharaoh (between 1187 and 1185 BC), it is regrettable that we have so little information on Tausert, traditionally the last ruler of Egypt's 19th Dynasty. Her name appears even in modern works in many different forms, including Twosre, Twore, Tawosret and Twosret.

Her birth name appears to have been Two-sret (setep-en-mut) which means "Might Lady, Chosen of Mut". Her Throne name was Sit-re Mery-amun which means "Daughter of Re, Beloved of Amun".

Tausert becomes known to us as the wife of Seti II, and apparently a very beloved wife at that, even though she was not his first. That was an honor given to a lady named Takhat II, though she apparently did not supply him with an heir.

Tausert gave birth to his first born son, Sethos Merneptah, but unfortunately he died young. It was Seti II who initially ordered her tomb to be built in the Valley of the Kings, an honor given to few queens.

Upon Seti II's death, a son by what appears to be a Syrian wife, his third, named Tiaa, ascended to the throne of Egypt. His name was Ramesses-Siptah (Siptah Merenptah), but he was very young, probably in his early teens. He also suffered from a deformed left leg.

It was Tausert who assumed the role of regent as the "Great Royal Wife", though it appears that for the remainder of her life, another powerful non-royal personage would perhaps be the power behind the throne.

In effect, Siptah was under the double supervision of his stepmother and a certain chancellor Bay. Bay was originally the royal scribe of Seti II, and is thought to have also been of Syrian decent. If tradition is to be believed, Bay seduced the pharaoh's widow, who then gave him total control of Egypt's treasury.

Siptah held the throne of Egypt for approximately six years before his death, when Tausert formally ascended the throne of Egypt herself. In fact, in the fifth year of Siptah's rule, Tausert elevated herself considerably, taking full royal titles as Hatshepsut had done several hundred years in the past. However, it is believed that Bay continued to largely rule in the background.

Her reign was short, lasting perhaps two years.

While little is known of this time, we do believe that campaigns were waged in the Sinai and Palestine, and there is evidence of her building work at Heliopolis, where a statue of the queen was found as well as at Thebes.

At Thebes, she constructed a mortuary temple discovered by William Petrie to the south of the Ramesseum, and of course, continued work on her tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

Her name also appears at Abydos, Hermopolis and Memphis.

She was probably originally buried in her tomb in the Valley of the Kings, but this tomb was later taken by Ramesses III for his father, Setnakht.

Her mummy has not been positively identified, though it has been suggested that the remains of an "Unknown Woman D" for KV 35 is that of Tausert.

20TH DYNASTY (1186-1069)

Setnakht - Userhauremeryamun - 1186-1184 B.C.

Refusing to acknowledge the previous two pharaohs, the first king of the 20th Dynasty dated the beginning of his reign to that of Seti II. He probably usurped the throne from Tworse, Seti II's widow, and later queen-pharaoh. He was at an advanced age when he took the throne but managed to accomplish peace and order in a short period of time. His tomb was not completed when he died so he was placed in that Tworse's. His coffin was found in Amenophis II's tomb but his mummy has not been found. Setakht was the father of Ramesses III and the husband of Ramesses' mother, Tiye-merenese.



The tomb of Tausert (Tawosret) and Setnakht (Sethnakhte) (KV 14) is one of the most unusual tombs in the Valley of the Kings, as is the story behind this tomb. It is also one of the largest tombs in the Valley, encompassing two complete burial chambers. The tomb has been open and known since antiquity.

Between 1983 and 1987, it was studied in detail by Hartwig Altenmiller. This tomb was originally built by Tausert, a queen and wife of Sethos II who would later rule Egypt as Pharaoh. It shows four distinct phases of construction, beginning when Tausert was still simply the queen. The construction was thus originally ordered by Seti II. The second phase of construction occurred after the death of Seti II, under the reign of King Siptah, who allowed the construction to go on much as Seti II had instructed.

During this period, a sarcophagus hall was created for the tomb, but was not of course designed as a king's burial chamber. Around 1190 BC, Tausert became the co-regent of Siptah, accepting the royal regalia and began work on the second burial chamber with the proper dimensions for a king. In fact, the entrance to the tomb and the corridors had to be enlarged to accommodate the size of what was now to be a royal coffin. Around 1187 BC, Queen Tausert actually ascended to the throne of Egypt as Pharaoh, and she ordered modifications to the tomb to reflect her exclusive royal status.



The Final Scene from the Book of Caverns

However, this is only part of the story. Setnakht, the father of Ramesses III had created his own tomb, KV 11 in the Valley of the Kings, as was the normal custom for kings of this period. While KV 11 was unfinished at the time of the king's death, there appears to have been plenty of time for it to be completed prior to the Kings burial. Yet, and apparently against the final wishes of his father, Ramesses III decided at the last minute to have his father interred in the tomb of Tausert, rather than his own.

In fact, Ramesses III, against the current custom, would likewise not build his own tomb, but take his fathers original tomb as his own (KV 11). We know nothing about his reasoning on these sharp departures from custom. Almost all the other Pharaohs buried in the Valley of the Kings built their own tombs, which they then occupied upon their deaths. However, KV 14 is not really Setnakht's tomb at all, as it was almost exclusively built for Tausert.



Typically, the first part of the tomb includes an entrance and three corridors that lead to a ritual shaft and then a small hall with no pillars. A fourth corridor leads to a small antechamber and then to the first burial chamber with several annexes. Just past this burial chamber are several more annexes and then two more corridors that lead to the second burial chamber, which also has four annexes and a corridor leading off from its rear. Both the first and the second burial chambers have eight pillars. Interestingly, the axis of the tomb approximates an east-west alignment, but the various extensions constructed at different times shift slightly in their orientation.



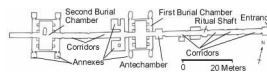
In the first corridor, we find images of Tausert before deities, though some of these have been usurped to show a king rather than Tausert herself. These images appear to be about the only decorations which were changed for Setnakht. Most of the remaining decorative plan remained the same, with the exception that most of the places where the queens image or name appears, the area was plastered over and painted with king Setnakht's image and name.

Within the second and third corridors are passages from the Book of the Dead and in the ritual shaft are images of various deities. In the first small hall are again scenes from the Book of the Dead, and in the following antechamber are images of deities. Just prior to the antechamber to the first burial chamber, we find scenes from the Opening of the Mouth ritual.

The first burial chamber has scenes from the Book of Gates and the closing scenes from the Book of Caverns, along with an astronomical ceiling.

After the first burial chamber, the corridors are decorated with scenes from the Amduat, and the second burial chamber has an astronomical ceiling, along with scenes from the Book of Gates on its walls.

Very little in the way of funerary equipment was found in this tomb, other than a smashed sarcophagus.



Ramses III- Usermaatremeryamun - 1184-1153 B.C.



The second king of the 20th Dynasty was the son of Sethnakhte and was the last great king of the New Kingdom. Ramesses III assumed the throne after his father's short two year reign.

Ramesses III fought the Libyans twice during his reign. He compared himself to Mont, the god of war and was confident in his abilities. He overcame an attack by the Sea Peoples in his eighth year as pharaoh. After defeating the Sea People (of which he took many captives) he attacked the Palestinian tribes and was again victorious. Ramesses received tributes from all conquered peoples.

Egypt, however, was experiencing financial problems. Workers were striking for pay and there was a general unrest of all social classes. Consequently, an unsuccessful harem revolt led to the deaths of many, including officials and women. During his thirty-one year reign, Ramesses III built the vast mortuary complex at Medinet Habu.





Mortuary Temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu

The entire Temple of Ramesses III, palace and town is enclosed within a defensive wall. Entry is through the Highgate, or Migdol, which, in appearance resembles an Asiatic fort.

Just inside the Highgate, to the south, are the chapels of Amenirdis I, Shepenwepet II and Nitoket, wives of the god Amun. To the north side is the chapel of Amun. These chapels were a later addition dating to the 18th Dynasties, by Hatshepsut and Tutmoses II. Later renovations were done by the Ptolemaic kings of the XXV Dynasty.

To the west is the temple proper, which was styled after the Ramesseum. On the north wall of the temple are reliefs depicting the victory of Ramesses with the Sardinians, Cretans, Philistines and the Danu. This was perhaps the greatest victory in ancient Egypt.

Pharaoh watched as the invaders crossed the plains, destroying everything in their path. The multitude came with oxen-drawn wagons, laden down with all of their possessions, their families and their newly discovered iron weapons. No tribe or settlement was able to survive their passing.

The horde came over the land and the sea heading straight for Egypt. Ramesses gathered together his army and defeated the land invaders. He then proceeded to the shore to meet the ships. Ramesses archers released their arrows against the landing ships.

(The Egyptians had an advantage over the enemy; the Egyptian ships had both sails and oars, while the invader's had only the sail.) The Egyptian army then rowed out to sea and overturned the invaders' ship drowning all that survived the archers' attack. These are the only known reliefs of a sea battle in Egypt.

The Egyptians were excellent accountants and counted everything that was taken from the enemy and all that were slain. The reliefs show the bookkeepers counting the spoils. Entering through the massive Pylon (27m high and 65m long) is the First

Court where athletic sporting events, such as wrestling, were held. Reliefs on the south wall are of Ramesses' victory over the Libyans and the Window of Appearances is on the west wall, flanked by eight columns. Behind this lies the audience hall with the kings' shower room nearby. The stone tank is still intact. On the east side are seven Osiride pillars.

The Second Court, accessed via ramp up and through the Pylon, is made up of eight Osiride pillars and six columns. Of the scenes in the Second Court are the Feast of Sokar and the lower part of the back wall being dedicated to Ramesses children. Of interest in the entrance at the right end of the hall is a relief of Ramesses kneeling on the symbol of Upper and Lower Egypt and a defaced scene of Ramesses before Seth, with the Pharaoh changed into Horus. The Hypostyle Hall through the west entrance was badly damaged in 27 B.C. by an earthquake. Originally, The Hall would have opened into many rooms but none remain due to the earthquake.

Close to the temple is the remains of a Nilometer. These 'flood warnings' were positioned strategically along the river to determine the position of the river every year. Not only did these register the height of the river, but also determined the amount of silt that was being deposited. With this information, the governors could, in advance, determine which crop would thrive and thus base the tax levy.

Ramesses III's tomb is in the Valley of the Kings. His mummy was found in a cache at Deir el-Bahri and is now in the Cairo Museum. Ramesses III is thought to have been about sixty-five years of age at his death.



Ramesses III built three shrines at Karnak that were dedicated to the gods Amun, Mut and Khonsu, and a palace at Leontopolis, just north of Cairo. Ramesses III's tomb is in the Valley of the Kings.



Ramses IV - Hekamaatresetepenamun - 1153-1147 B.C.

Ramesses IV was the son of Ramesses III. His reign lasted no more than six years. He did survive the harem conspiracy which was designed to spoil his claims to the throne. He placed a document in the tomb of his father which is now known as the Papyrus Harris I, that gives an elaborate account of the reign of Ramesses III. Ramesses IV is thought to have been in his forties when he became king.

There are two stele that were found at Abydos by Mariette that proclaim his piety and exceptional devotion to the gods. The quarrying of the stone is said to have involved more than 8,000 people. Ramesses IV caused the high-priest Mont, as well as other capable officials and scribes to visit the site.

There were 5,000 soldiers that were most likely sent to haul the huge stones over the rough desert roads. He is also known for the continuation of the Khonsu at Karnak, which was begun by his father, Ramesses III. A temple at Asasif, which is on the western bank of the Nile at Thebes, was erected by Ramesses. Ramesses' tomb was found in the Valley of the Kings and his mummy is now in the Cairo Museum. The remains indicate that Ramesses was a small man who was bald, had a long nose and good teeth.



The tomb of Ramesses IV (KV 2) in the Valley of the Kings is rather different than most other royal tombs built here. Ramesses III, had been assassinated, and when his son, Ramesses IV took the throne, he did so in a period of economic decline in Egypt. Though large, his tomb is highly simplistic, and unique in many ways. The tomb was known early on, and was in fact used as a sort of hotel by early explorers such as Champollion and Rosellini (1829), Robert Hay, Furst Puckler, Theodore Davis and others. It was also an important Coptic Christian dwelling, and was also

frequently visited in antiquity. There was considerable Coptic and Greek graffiti on the tomb walls.

Interestingly, two sketched plans of this tomb are known, the most famous and complete of which is contained within the a papyrus in Turin.

One unusual aspect of the tomb is that there is very little decline as one travels from the first part of the tomb through to its rear. The entrance begins with a split stairways to either side of a ramp, opening into a first, second and third corridors. The final corridor leads to a smallish antechamber, and then to the burial chamber. To the rear of the burial chamber are some small annexes, but otherwise the tomb contains no lateral annexes. The corridors are unusual for their width and height, some measuring three meters (10 feet) wide and four meters (15 feet high).

The facade of the tomb is decorated with scenes of the king's coronation, as well as a scene depicting Isis and Nephthys venerating the sun disk. Within the first two corridors are scenes and text from the Litany of Ra, proceeded by a typical painting of the king worshipping the falcon headed sun god, Ra-Horakhty.

On the ceilings are vultures, falcons and winged scarabs with spread wings. In the third corridor we find the first and second parts of the Book of Caverns, with simple ceilings decorated with stars, but which later becomes vaulted. From this corridor, a ramp leads through the antechamber into the burial chamber. The antechamber is decorated with scenes from the Book of the Dead, mostly chapter 125 which deals with the judgement of the dead.

The burial chamber, which is not large, is almost filled by the still resident sarcophagus. However, this sarcophagus is unusually large. The burial chamber is decorated with the second, third and fourth hours from the Book of Gates. The ceiling is uniquely decorated with two large figures representing Nut, rather than the usual stellar constellations.

There are also scenes from the Book of Nut, and the Book of the Night. The annexes behind the burial chamber contain text from the first part of the Book of Caverns. Other parts of this annex are painted with burial offerings such as beds, shrines and canopic jars.

Little funerary equipment is known to have been found within the tomb itself. The sarcophagus was broken into at one end during antiquity and the lid displaced. The king's mummy was eventually found in KV 35.



Ramesses V is thought to have reigned no more than four years. He was the son of Ramesses IV and Queen Ta-Opet. The mummy was found in the tomb of Amenophis II and is now located in the Cairo Museum. The mummy shows that he died of smallpox at about the age of 35.



His tomb was unfinished and was in the Biban el-Moluk, but was annexed by Ramesses VI. All that is found of his reign is a stela that was discovered at Gebel Silsilh.

he Pharaoh Ramses V (left) died of smallpox in 1157 B.C. The disease reached Europe in 710 A.D. and was transferred to America by Hernando Cortez in 1520 - 3.5 million Aztecs died in the next 2 years. In the cities of 18th century Europe, smallpox reached plague proportions and was a feared scourge - highly infectious. Five reigning European monarchs died from smallpox during the 18th century.

Ramses VI - Nebmaatremeryamun - 1143-1136 B.C.

The fifth king of the 20th Dynasty usurped the throne from his nephew, Ramesses V. However, the son of Ramesses III allowed mortuary ceremonies to continue for Ramesses V, who was only on the throne for four years. He usurped cartouches of previous kings and left his name on inscriptions in the Sinai. He built statues in Bubastis, Coptos, Karnak and Nubia. After his tomb was vandalized, the priests had to pin the corpse on a board in order to provide the remains with a decent burial.

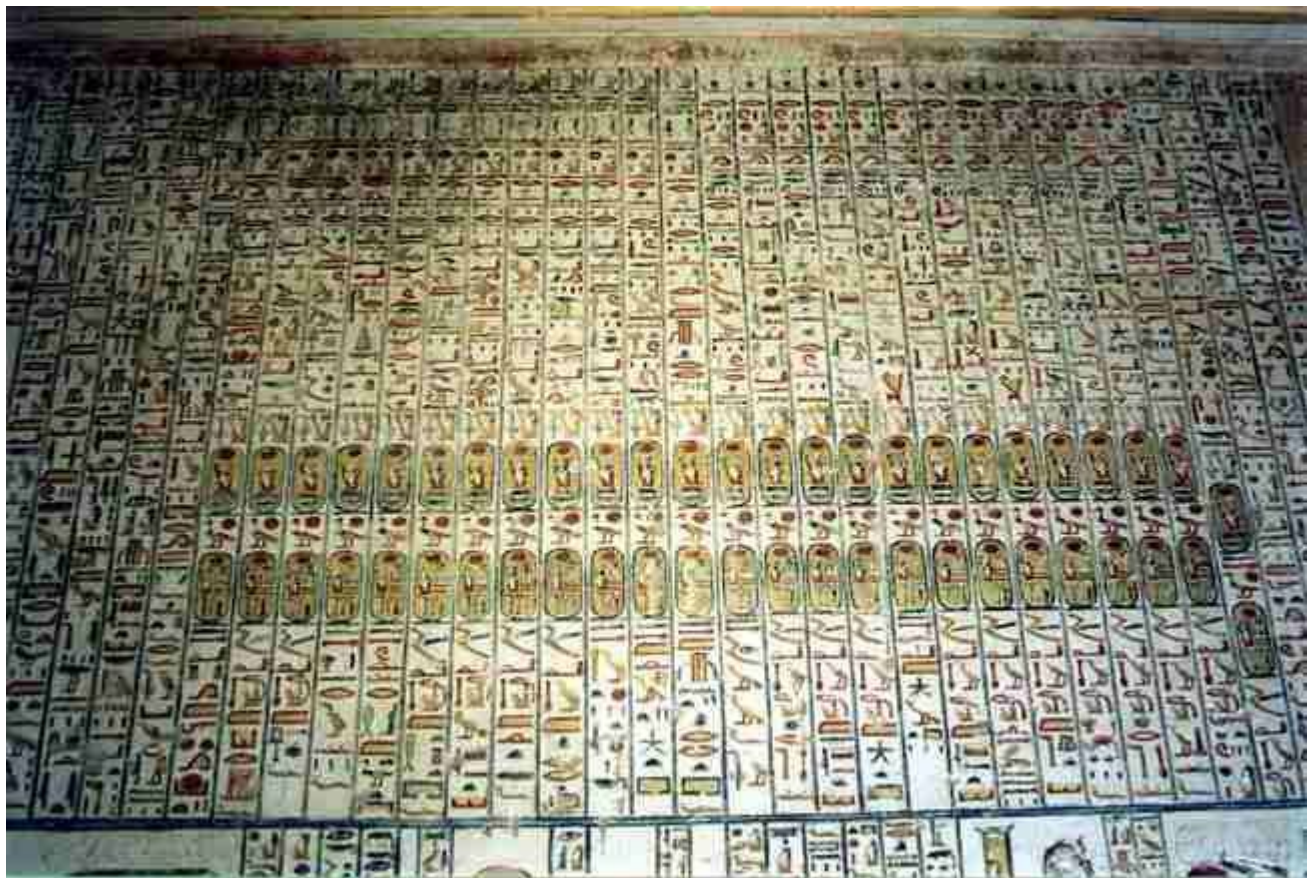


The tomb of Ramesses V (KV 9) is one of the most interesting tombs in the Valley of the Kings. Its decorations represent sort of a treatise on theology, in which the fundamental elements are the sun and its daily journey in the world of darkness. In general, the decorations provide the story of the origins of the heavens, earth, the creation of the sun, light and life itself. The decorative plan for this tomb is one of the most sophisticated and complete in the Valley of the Kings.

However, as it turns out, Ramesses VI was not much of a tomb builder, for this tomb was originally build by his predecessor, Ramesses V.

It was only enlarged by Ramesses VI. Why Ramesses VI did not build his own tomb, as was certainly the tradition, is unknown to us. However, the inscriptions for Ramesses V found in the first parts of the tomb were not usurped, and it is clear that the brothers probably shared a common theology.

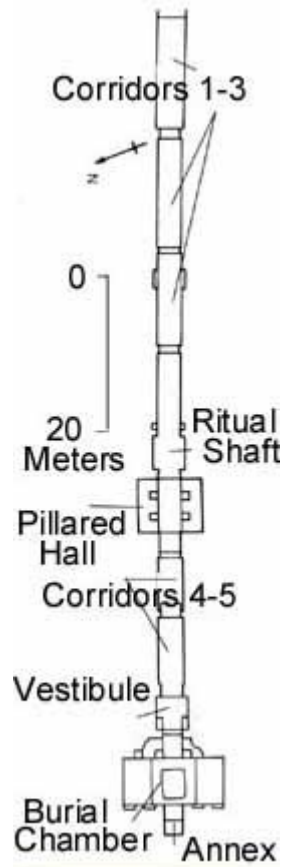
The tomb has been known of since antiquity, attested to by numerous graffiti. It was known to the Romans as the tomb of Memnon, and to the scholars of the Napoleonic Expedition as La Tombe de la Metempsychose. It was cleared of debris by George Daressy in 1888.



The tomb itself is somewhat simplistic, with no true stairways, but otherwise similar to other 20th Dynasty tombs. There are three corridors that lead to the ritual shaft, and then to a four pillared hall. This is followed by two more corridors, a vestibule and

then the burial chamber with its single annex at the rear. The last corridor (number 5) is unique, as the floor is sloping while the roof is horizontal. This was done to avoid part of tomb KV 12

In this tomb, astronomical ceilings are found in each passage. The walls of the first through third corridors are painted with images from the Book of Gates and the Book of Caverns, a theme which is continued on into the vestibule.

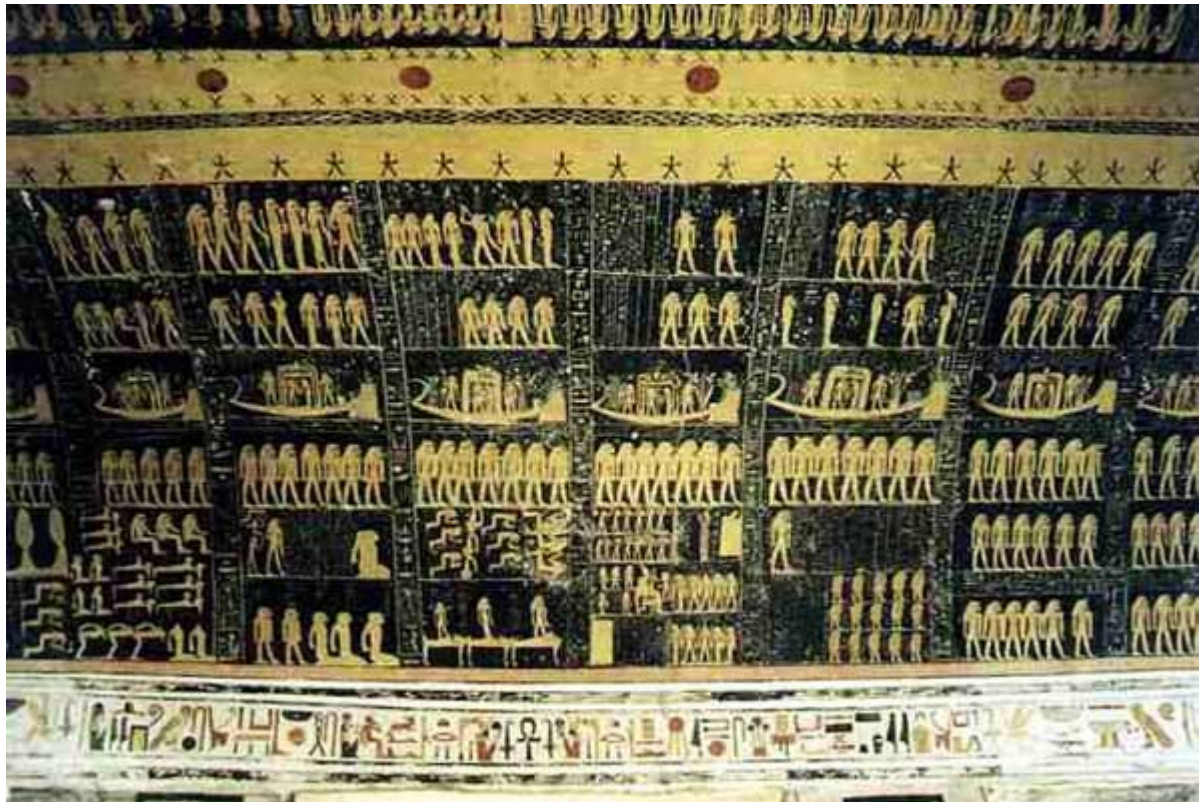


The beginning of the first corridor has a scene of the king making offerings to Ra-Horakhty followed by Osiris, now shown on both sides of the corridor.



But rather than the Litany of Ra, the Book of Gates follows on the south wall and the Book of Caverns on the north. In the fourth and fifth corridors there are also passages from the Book of Amduat, and in the vestibule passages from the Book of the Dead. The walls of the burial chamber, where there is to be found a broken sarcophagus, are painted with illustrations from the Book of the Earth, while the astronomical ceiling has decorations from the Book of the Day and the Book of the Night. While the decorations are well colored with sunk reliefs, stylistically the art is inferior to most of the 19th Dynasty tombs.





The mummy of Ramesses VI was not found in his tomb, but rather that of Amenophis II. This tomb is also included in the subject of the well known Papyrus Mayer B, which records the robbery of the tomb during antiquity, probably before Year 9 of Ramesses IX.

Ramses VII - Usermaatresetepenre - 1136-1129 B.C.



Ramesses VII is probably the son of Ramesses VI and was the sixth king of the Twentieth Dynasty. He built a tomb in the Valley of the Kings, but there are no other monuments that he built. He did have a son that did not live to succeed him.

Ramses VIII - Usermaatreakhenamun - 1129-1126 B.C.

Ramesses VIII was the seventh king of the Twentieth Dynasty and was probably Ramesses III's son. His mummy has never been found and all that remains of his reign is an inscription at Medinet Habu and some plaques. His tomb was found but was very modest.

Ramses IX - Neferkaresetepenre - 1126-1108 B.C.



Ramesses IX was the eighth king of the Twentieth Dynasty. He is thought to have reigned for about seventeen or more years. During his reign, there was a scandal in which the tombs in the Theban necropolis were being robbed. There were also campaigns by Libyan bandits. He had a son, Montuherkhopshef, who did not live to succeed Ramesses. His tomb was found in the Valley of the Kings.

The tomb of Ramesses IX (KV 6) is the first tomb one encounters within the modern entrance to the Valley of the Kings. It is a rather simplistic tomb in most respects, though the art work is interesting.



Entrance is made to the tomb down a corridor with steps on either side, which then connects to the first true corridor with two annexes on either side. However, one of the annexes was never completed. This is followed by a second and third corridor, prior to reaching a vestibule. Note the absence of a ritual shaft. The vestibule opens into a four pillared hall, and then a very short corridor which leads to the burial chamber with no annexes. It is possible that the burial chamber was originally meant to be another corridor, as it is very small, but was converted because of the king's death. An unusual feature of the burial chamber is a two tiered pit in the floor. No sarcophagus has ever been found.



The decorative theme for this tomb begins with the king's adoration of the sun disk, accompanied by Isis and Nephthys on the lintel over the entrance. Variations of this are also found on the door lintels of the second and third corridors. The art in this tomb is similar to that of Ramesses VI, though here, the first two corridors have passages from the Litanies of Re, rather than the Book of Gates. It appears that only decorative theme of the first corridor was completed during Ramesses IX's lifetime, with the remainder of the artwork completed with much less care and skill after his death.



In the second and third corridors, in addition to the Litanies of Re, there are also passages from the Book of the Dead, the Book of Caverns, and in the last part, the Book of Amduat. Probably due not only to the changing concept of the Afterlife, but also the lack of space, most of the texts are abbreviated, and the Book of Gates does not show up at all. There are figures of two priests to either side of the door to the pillared hall representing the Opening of the Mouth ritual. The burial chamber has a

vaulted ceiling with a double representation of Nut and passages from the Book of the Day and the Book of the Night.

There is little in the way of funerary equipment which was discovered in the tomb. No sarcophagus was found.

Ramses X - Khepermaatresetepenre - 1108-1099 B.C.

Ramesses X was the ninth king of the Twentieth Dynasty. During his reign the workers went on strike for wages not paid. There are few monuments of Ramesses that have survived. He left a tomb in the Valley of the Kings.



Tomb KV18 in the Valley of the Kings on the West Bank at Luxor (Thebes) was cut for Ramesses X, the second to last ruler of Egypt's 20th Dynasty. It is located in the southwest wadi. The tomb was unfinished and has only recently been cleared, though apparently some amount of debris remains. It has had a number of visitors over the years, beginning with Richard Pococke in the early 1700s. No real funerary material of the owner has ever been discovered, and even the foundation deposits discovered by Howard Carter were uninscribed.

The tomb consists of little more than an entranceway and two corridors (that we know of). It was probably open during antiquity, before being buried under mud and rubble.

The entrance to the tomb continues with the Ramessid tendency to create ever larger facades, this one being some 10 cm (4 inches) wider than that of the previous king's tomb.

However, it is simple and has little slope. There was a divided stairway, though only a few steps remain. At the end of the entrance there was a step-down into the first corridor. Here, on the reveals and thickness of the doorjamb are the remains of the king's name.

The tomb's first corridor was blocked by the electric lighting installations for the Valley of the Kings which was housed there by Howard Carter in 1904. Here, Carter also had the walls whitewashed, and had a level base built as a foundation for the generating equipment! Furthermore, he constructed retaining walls at the sides and end of the chamber, adding additional roofing. Some of this equipment remains in the tomb today. There has been some ceiling collapse at the rear of this corridor. This corridor was originally fully cut and decorated.

The first corridor leads into a second corridor that was blocked by a modern wall which has recently been stripped away. There is a step down into this second corridor, that was never completely cut. There remains actual rough steps leading up to the abandoned workface. The ceiling here has collapsed, but a couple of large rectangular recess were cut in each wall near the ceiling.

Within the outer areas, little decoration remains. Due to flooding, the beautiful example of the Ramessid entrance motif of the king kneeling on either side of the sun disc on the horizon and ram headed god, along with attendant goddesses Isis and Nephthys) that was drawn by Champollion's artists in 1826 are lost to us.



Most of the plaster and paint have fallen away. Only a portion of the left-hand side of the design is still visible along with modern European graffiti probably dating from between 1623 and 1905 AD. Traces of other badly damaged scenes may be found in the first corridor on the east and west walls. These include a rough head of Re-Horakhty on the left wall of the first passage. On the right wall we can also recognize the king in front of Re-Horakhty and Meretseger, followed by a sun disk.

There are no decoration in the second corridor. The only artifacts we are aware of that have been removed from the tomb (area) are those found in the foundation deposit by Howard Carter. They included blue glazed models of tools, mostly, including according to Carter "adze, hoe and yoke".

We know know that Ramesses X was not put to rest in this tomb, though his mummy has never been found anywhere else, either.

Ramses XI - Menmaatresetepenptah - 1099-1069 B.C.

Ramesses XI was the tenth and the last king of the Twentieth Dynasty as well as the New Kingdom. The reign of this king was a period of turmoil. Ramesses was not a very energetic or vital ruler. The viceroy of Nubia, Panehsi, went from Elephantine to Thebes to try to stop the unrest that was arising from contention over the region that was between the high priest of Amon and others. At the same time there was a famine and was called the "Year of the Hyena." Hrihor was left in Thebes by Panehsi to control the affairs there.

He soon assumed the role of the high priest of Amon and eventually became the vizier as well. This was the cause of the eventual downfall of Panehsi.

Panehsi rebelled and stopped Egypt's domination in Nubia. Hrihor administered the affairs of Egypt while Ramesses XI remained in seclusion. Upon the death of Ramesses, Hrihor and Smendes divided Egypt between themselves. Ramesses was technically pharaoh until his death, but Hrihor was the ruler of Upper Egypt for all practical purposes. Ramesses' death marked the end of the Twentieth Dynasty and the New Kingdom.

His tomb is located in the Valley of the Kings.





Tomb KV4, located in the Valley of the Kings on the West Bank at Luxor has been known and open since antiquity (though not open to the public now), and it received many ancient tourists, as evidenced by the Demotic Egyptian, Greek, Latin, Coptic and later, French and English graffiti on its walls, and was noted by the French expedition to Egypt in the late 18th century.

The tomb consists of an initial entrance, a first corridor followed by a relatively sharp descending ramp, with a second, and then a third corridor prior to reaching the undecorated and undug ritual well room. The entrance and first two corridors have a shallow slope, and in the second corridor we find a pair of rectangular niches in the usual positions, near the corridor's entrance, on the north and south walls. The unfinished pillared hall follows, after which a ramp leads into the unfinished burial chamber with a deep burial shaft in its center. Interestingly, within the burial chamber the pillars are rectangular rather than square. The ceiling is vaulted. While there were no barriers in this tomb, pivot holes for door leaves were present in most of the inner corridors and chambers.

The only decorations discovered within the tomb were on the doorway between the entrance and the first corridor, and at the beginning of the first corridor. In the doorway lintel between the entrance and the first corridor, we find Ramesses XI kneeling between two goddesses flanked by the sun disk, Aten. We also find the king's name on the door jamb.

Currently, we do not know the location of Ramesses XI's actual burial, but it has been suggested that he may have been laid to rest somewhere in Northern Egypt.

THIRD INTERMEDIATE PERIOD (1070-715 BC)

DYNASTIES 21-24

The period of the 21st Dynasty represents one of the most confused spots in Egyptian history! To call it a dynasty is actually somewhat of a misnomer since they were primarily powerful priests rather than royalty.

One of the results of revised chronology is, that now we have internal political and social conditions in neighboring countries matching each others circumstances. In conventional chronology the 21st Dynasty of priest-princes was in power in the days of the early Israelite monarchy.

In the 21st Dynasty the capital of Egypt moved from Tanis to Libyan, to Nubia, to Thebes, to SAIS, and then back to Nubia and Thebes.

After 1085 BC, Egypt split between a northern 21st dynasty claiming national recognition reigning from Tanis and a line of Theban generals and high priests of Amen who actually controlled the south from Thebes. Relations between the two authorities were peaceful. The Tanites were driven from power by Libyan warriors who established their own Twenty-Second Dynasty.

There was a tradition of representing the high priest as the king's representative: Herihor does not claim royal dignity. With the exception of Piankh, Herihor and his successors Pinedjem, Masaharta, and Menkheperre all used the title of High Priest of Amen as their principal title. The titles gradually diminished in number, reflecting not so much a reduction in power but an emphasis on their role as the highest authority in the Thebais and Upper Egypt. The title of High Priest of Amen gave the bearers control over the domains of Amen and at the same time emphasised the fact that they derived their power from Amen. In the peculiar combinations of royal titles and that of High Priest, it becomes clear that the rulers of Tanis and Thebes only represented an ideal kingship.

The reign of the Pharaohs mentioned below is debatable. The establishment of flawless genealogies has thus far proved a baffling task. This is based on the writings of Manetho.

The part played by women in ancient Egypt had always been great, but at this juncture it was greater than ever. The inscriptions are abnormally communicative in the use of such epithets as 'King's Daughter', 'King's Great Wife'.

A perplexing feature of the problem is that the same female name was often born by several individuals. The title 'God's Wife of Amun', of which the first component goes back far into the past, has won an ever increasing political importance, though its exact implications are mysterious. Under Pinudjem I the Ma'kare' who bears this title is depicted as a mere child, though she has often been credited with being his wife.

Very possibly she was the daughter of Psusennes I. She is certainly to be distinguished from a later Ma'kare' who was a daughter of the Tanite king Psusennes

II and whose rights as an heiress were set forth on a long inscription in the temple of Karnak. This is but one example of the difficulties which cluster round the names of such princesses as Henutowe, Isimkheb, and others. Here it need only be added that some of these royal ladies enjoyed no inconsiderable wealth through their tenure of priestly offices.

For instance Neskhons, the well-known wife of Pinudjem II, is described on a coffin bearing her name as 'first chief of the concubines of Amen-Re', King of the Gods; Major-domo of the house of Mut the great, lady of Ashru; prophetess of Anhur-Shu the son of Re'; prophetess of Min, Horus, and Isis in Ipu; prophetess of Horus, lord of Djuef; god's mother of Chons the child, first one of Amen-Re', King of the Gods; and chief of noble ladies' - to which an accompanying column of inscription adds four more local priesthoods.

Unhappily the name of Neskhons has been painted over that of Isimkheb to whom, therefore, these titles doubtless properly belong. If the localities mentioned in them are to be taken seriously, it would seem that the Theban influence extended far northwards into Middle Egypt, a fact confirmed at El-Hiba by bricks bearing the names of the high-priests Pinudjem I and Menkheperre. Of El-Hiba we shall hear again in connection with Dyn. XXII. These complications are typical of the difficulties which attended the unraveling of the problems of Dyn. XXI. Further attempts at elucidation must be left to the future. The material is abundant, but mostly ambiguous. Here we must content ourselves with giving some account of two great discoveries by which the views of the historians have been completely transformed.

Almost since the times of their actual burial the mighty kings of Dyns. XVII to XX had been exposed to violation and theft on the part of the rapacious inhabitants of the Theban necropolis, and it was only as a last frantic effort to put an end to such sacrilege that the high-priests of Dyn. XXI intervened.

This they could do with greater confidence since the golden ornaments and other precious possessions had long ago disappeared, so that little more than the coffins and corpses remained to be salvaged.

However, for the modern world thus to recover the remains of many of the greatest Pharaohs was a sensation till then unequaled in the annals of archaeology. To be able to gaze upon the actual features of such famous warriors as Tuthmosis III and Sethos I was a privilege that could be legitimately allowed to the serious historian, though it was for a time denied to the merely curious. Besides the nine kings who were found there were a number of their queens, as well as some princes and lesser personages. Hieratic dockets on certain coffins or mummy wrappings disclosed the dates of the reburials and the authorities responsible for them.

More important from the purely historical point of view were the intact coffins of high-priests of Dyn. XXI and their womenfolk. The hieroglyphic inscriptions furnishing no small portion of the material for the discussions contained in Maspero's fundamental monograph on the find. Among the latest burials were those of Pinudjem II and his already-mentioned spouse Neskhons. After them the cache was sealed up in the tenth year of the Tanite king Siamun, but was reopened once more in the reign of King Shoshenk I in order to enter a priest of Amun named Djedptahefonkh.

From the end of Dyn. XX onwards the outstanding feature of the Theban administration was its recourse to oracular decisions on all occasions. We have seen how under the high-priest Pay'onkh a temple appointment was effected by this method, the great god Amen-Re' halting his processional bark to nod approval when the right name was presented to him.

Later when the inheritance of the princess Ma'kare' was in dispute, it was Amen-Re', accompanied by the goddess Mut and the child-god Chons, the two other members of his triad, who decided the issue. Again, when Menkheperre' became high-priest his first act was to inquire from the supreme god whether certain persons who had been banished to the oasis could now be pardoned and allowed to return to Thebes.

To judge by the size of a great inscription engraved on a wall at Karnak the trial of an official for dishonesty which Pinudjem II was called upon to initiate must have been one of exceptional importance. In this trial a whole series of questions were addressed to the deity, who seems to have been unwilling to proceed to his yearly ceremonial visit to Luxor until the matter was settled.

The first step consisted in placing before him two tablets, the one affirming and the other denying that there was a case calling for investigation. In short, so far as our limited material goes, there was no subject demanding the high-priest's personal intervention which was not settled by an oracular response.

21ST DYNASTY (1070 - 945 B.C.)

Smedes - Hedjkheperresetepenre - Nesbaneb-Djedet - Nesbaneb-Djedet) - 1070-1044 B.C.

Smedes was an official during the reign of Ramesses XI of the 20th Dynasty. Smedes began his rule in Tanis. There he was the high priest of Amon and the viceroy of Lower Egypt. Hrihor was also a high priest of Amon and the viceroy of Upper Egypt. Together these two kept Ramesses XI in seclusion on his estates. Upon the death of Ramesses, Smedes and Hrihor divided Egypt among them, which started the Twenty-first Dynasty. As a native of Djede, Smedes could have no personal right to the throne. The only record of Smedes' reign is a damaged inscription on a pillar in a quarry at Gebelen.

Amenemnisu - Nephhercheres - Neferkarehikwast - 1040 B.C.

Amenemnisu was the second ruler of the Twenty-first Dynasty. He is thought to have ruled for four years possibly as the co-regent with Psusennes I.

Psusennes I - Akheperre-setepanamun Psibkhaemne - 1040-992 B.C.

'The Star which arose in Thebes'



Funeral Mask



Sarcophagus

At Tanis Psusennes I often uses the epithet 'high-priest of Amen-Re'.

Once in a very full titulary describes himself as 'great of monuments in Ipet-eswe' at Karnak.

Psusennes I was the third king of the Twenty-first Dynasty and is probably the best known of all this dynasty's kings. This is because of the discovery of his intact tomb during the excavation of Tanis. His mummy was found in the tomb and was that of an old man. Also in the tomb was a second burial chamber was for his sister and wife, Queen Mutnodjme. At some time later, her mummy and funerary objects were removed. King Amunemope's mummy and funerary objects were placed there after he was moved from another tomb that was not too far away. There were also several other mummies found in this tomb as well. These mummies were thought to have been placed here to be protected from the destruction of the other tombs around.

Amenope - (Amunemope)(Amenophthis)(Usermare-setepenamun) - 993-984 B.C.

Amenope was the fourth king of the Twenty-first Dynasty. It is possible that he wrote one of the most famous Egyptian books of wisdom, known as the Instruction of Amenope. In this book, advice is offered to his son on integrity, honesty, self-control and kindness. He teaches that it is reliance on god that this tranquillity and the freedom from overanxiety can be attained.

Osochor 984-978

Siamun - (Amunemope)(Amenophthis)(Usermare-setepenamun) - 978-959 B.C.

Siamun is listed as the sixth king of the Twenty-first Dynasty. Very little is known about his reign except that he is the one who sealed up the great Der el-Bahri cache. He is believed to have reigned for seventeen years.

Psusennes II - Titkheperure-setepenamun - Psibkhaemne

Psusennes II was the seventh and final king of the Twenty-first Dynasty. He is believed to have ruled for 14 years. There are inscriptions on monuments which are the only information showing his reign.

22ND DYNASTY (945-712 B.C.)

The 22nd Dynasty is often referred to as the Libyan Bubastite Dynasty. Manetho lists the kings of this Dynasty as being from Bubastis which is located in the eastern delta. The Libyan element is evident in the founder, Sheshonq I, who inaugurated the sequence of Libyan Chiefs which ruled Egypt for the next 200 years.

Shoshenq I - Hedjkheperre-setepenre - Sheshonq - 945-924 B.C.

The 22d dynasty (945-730 BCE) was founded by Sheshonq I, probably descended from long-settled Libyan mercenaries, the Meshwesh. Shoshenq I ruled for twenty-one years.

His name first appeared in a long inscription found at Abydos while he was the 'great chief of the Meshwesh, prince of princes.' His father was Nemrat, who was the son of the lady Mehetemwaskhe, died and Shoshenq asked the king at that time to allow a funerary cult to be built at Abydos in his honor. The king must have been the last Psusennes of the Twenty-first Dynasty. Shoshenq's son had married Psusennes' daughter, Makare.

Sheshonq I supported Jeroboam against King Solomon's son, Rehoboam and campaigned later in Palestine (ca.930) laying tribute upon the king of Judah. He instituted a decentralized system, with kings based in the north and their sons ruling key centers elsewhere. Rivalries and sporadic civil wars followed, and by the 8th century BCE Egypt had been divided into eleven autonomous states, whose inhabitants depended on congested, walled towns for security. Their increased anxiety found expression in their worship of local rather than national gods.

It is possible that the transition from the Twenty-first to the Twenty-second Dynasty was a peaceful one. Shoshenq's wife, Karoma, was the mother of Osorkon I who was Shoshenq's successor. Shoshenq did considerable building at home in Egypt. He added a new colonnaded forecourt with a triumphal gate that formed an extension of the hypostyle hall in the Amun temple. No work had been done at Karnak since the end of the Nineteenth Dynasty. He also had a successful campaign against the kingdom of Judah and the kingdom of Israel. His tomb is located at Tanis.

Osorkon I - (Sekhemkheperre-setepenre) - 924-909 B.C.



Osorkon bringing offerings

Osorkon I is the second king of the Twenty-second Dynasty. Between the reigns of Osorkon I and Takelot I, a Shoshenq II is often shown as a co-regent for a brief period of time.

Osorkon I, who succeeded his father, continued to provide strong patronage for the various leading priesthoods, thereby consolidating his position as well as maintaining a continuous building program, especially at his native city of Bubastis. The chief priesthood of Amun at Karnak was taken from his brother Inhotep and given to one of his sons, Sheshonq(II) whom he took as a co-regent in 890 B.C.E. Sheshonq, however, died a few months earlier than his father, and both were buried at Tanis.

Takelot I - (Usermare-setepenamun) - 909-894 B.C.

Takelot I was the third king of the Twenty-second Dynasty. He was the successor to Osorkon I, but is shown to have had a co-regent, Sheshonq II, for a brief period before his reign began.

This reign, although 15 years in length, has left no major monuments, but saw the beginning of the fragmentation of Egypt once more into two power bases.

Shoshenq II - (Heqakheperre-setepenre) - 894-883 B.C.

Shoshenq II is thought to have been the co-regent during the period between Osorkon I and Takelot I during the Twenty-second Dynasty. His mummy was found at Tanis in the tomb of Psusennes I.

Osorkon II - (Usermare-setepenamun) - 883-855 B.C.

Osorkon II was the fifth king of the Twenty-second Dynasty. There are inscriptions in the hypostyle hall of the Luxor temple that indicate that there was a very high inundation of the Nile during the third year of his reign. The inscription says, "All the temples of Thebes were like marshes." During his twenty-second year, he celebrated the Sed Festival.

He built a granite gateway at the great temple at Bubastis and decorated the gateway with scenes of this festival. During his reign, there was weakness internally and there were threats from the Assyrians. Egypt's borders did not extend as far as they once had and tried to resist the increasing pressures from the east by joining the states of Palestine and Syria. It is possible that a co-regent ruled with Osorkon II named Harsiese, who was the high priest of Amun at Thebes. It is possible that Harsiese was the son of Osorkon. His tomb has been found at Tanis. It was constructed of large stones with several chambers inside. Several other bodies were found inside such as King Takelot II.

Takelot II - (Hedjkheperre-setepenre) - 860-835 B.C.

Takelot II was the sixth king of the Twenty-second Dynasty. He was the father to the high priest of Amun, Osorkon. This Osorkon was responsible for the longest inscription on the Bubastite Gate. According to his inscription, during the fifteenth year of Takelot's reign, there was warfare in the North and South and a great convulsion broke out in the land.

Takelot II maintained stability in the South where his half brother Nimlot had consolidated his position by extending North to Herakleopolis and placing his son Ptahwedjankhef in charge there. Nimlot then married his daughter Karomama II to Takelot II, thereby cementing a bond between North and South and becoming the father-in-law of his half brother.

The remains of Takelot II were found in a usurped sarcophagus from the Middle Kingdom in Tanis. His Canopic jars and ushabti-figures were found with him as well.

Shoshenq III - (Usermare-setepenre) - 835-783 B.C.

Shoshenq III was the seventh king of the Twenty-second Dynasty. He is thought to have ruled for fifty-two years. During the twenty-eighth year of his reign, an Apis bull was born. This is recorded on the Serapeum stela by a priest named Pediese. His tomb was found at Tanis and was similar in structure to those of Psusennes I and Osorkon II.

Pami - (Usermare-setepenre Pimay)(Pemay) - 783-773 B.C.

Pami was the eighth king of the Twenty-second Dynasty. He reigned for approximately six years following the fifty-two year reign of Shoshenq III. Pami is translated to "The Cat".

Shoshenq IV - (Akheperre-setepenre) - 773-735 B.C.

Shoshenq IV was the ninth king of the Twenty-second Dynasty. The Serapeum stela of Paserhor is dated as the thirty-seventh year of Shoshenq IV. This shows that he reigned at least this long. In the year 732, toward the end of his reign, an Assyrian, Tiglath-pileser III took Damascus and killed Rezin. He then captured many cities of northern Israel and took the people to Assyria. The Egyptian troops had at one time joined forces with Damascus, Israel and some other states to resist Shalmaneser III at Qarqar. There is no indication that Shoshenq IV made any attempt to help the former allies.

Osorkon IV - (Akheperre-setepenamun) - 735-712 B.C.

Osorkon IV was the tenth and final ruler of the Twenty-second Dynasty. During his reign, Hoshea, the king of Israel, sent messengers to Osorkon in Egypt. He was requesting help against Shalmaneser V. No help was sent. Samaria was captured and the Israelites were taken away to Assyria. There was also threats from Sargon II, who was the Assyrian king. To try to avoid an attack, Osorkon IV tried a rich gift and it apparently worked. The Assyrian king came no further.

23RD DYNASTY (740- 725 BC)

Pedubaste I - (Usermare-setepenamun)(Petubastis) - 740-?

Pedubaste I was the first king of the Twenty-third Dynasty. He is mentioned several times in the inscriptions at Karnak. Pedubaste is thought to have been the son of the high priest of Amun, Harsiese.

Osorkon IV 777-749

Peftjauwybast 740-725

24TH DYNASTY (725 - 715 BC)

Shepsesre Tefnakht I - 725-720 B.C.



Tefnakht I was the first king of the 24th Dynasty, also known as the Sais Dynasty.

In the Piankhy stela, he is called the "chief of the West," "chief of Me," and "chief of Sais." He also gives himself titles as prophets and royal titles.

He attempted to put a stop to an invasion by organizing other Northern Kings with him against the invaders from the south. This southern force was comprised of Piankhi's Nubian forces that wanted to gain control of all of Egypt. The four northern armies under Tefnakht, Osorkon IV of Tanis, Peftjauabastet of Hermopolis, and Nimlot, Inpet of Leontopolis all enjoyed a relatively easy time in their conquering of the people down to the south, but Piankhi was actually drawing them down. When Tefnakht's forces finally reached Memphis they were massacred and Tefnakht conceded to Piankhi. Tefnakht and the four other leaders were allowed to remain governors of their territories under the new Pharaoh Piankhi.

Wahkare Bakenranef - 720-715 B.C.

Bakenranef was the second king of the Twenty-fourth Dynasty. His name was found on a vase that was found in an Etruscan tomb at Tarquinia which is located 100 kilometers northwest of Rome. Papyrus plants on the vase suggest the area of the Delta. He is shown in the company of gods and goddesses, such as goddess Neith of Sais.

LATE KINGDOM

25TH DYNASTY (712 - 657 BC)

Piye - 747-716 BC



Most references point to Piye as being the first ruler of the 25th Dynasty. Different references refer to him under different names. He supposedly ruled Kush (Nubia) from about 750 to 719 BC.

Piankhi was his birth name. But in various references, we see his birth name referred to as Piankhy, Piye, Piy and Piyi. However, some references point out that his true name was Piye, and that this was wrongly read as Piankhi.

His Throne Name was Men-kheper-re, meaning "The Manifestation of Re Abides". This name too will vary, being also spelled Menkheperra. Of course, this king, as most others, had several other names which are not generally provided. Piye ascended the Nubian (Kushite) throne (or at least its northern half) as the successor of Kashta, which explains why at least one reference refers to Kashta as the founder of the 25th Dynasty. Kashta apparently had made some earlier advances into Egypt. But it was Piye who, for the first time, consolidated the rulership of Nubia and Egypt.

From the earliest dynastic periods, Nubia was always a matter of conquest for the Egyptian pharaohs, and as such, much of Nubia was often under the control of Egypt. At times, it was very much a part of Egypt, and the customs of Nubia were a reflection of those in at least Upper Egypt. This perhaps explains Piye's seemingly strong emotional ties with Egypt, what he considered to be part of his motherland, even though he was not from Egypt proper.

So at least towards the end of the Third Intermediate Period, when Egypt seems to have surrendered to chaos with four kings claiming rule within Egypt, as well as a number of local chieftains exercising control, particularly in the Delta, Piye decided to

step in and fix Egypt's problems. Kashta had a stele erected at the Elephantine Temple of Khnum (current day Aswan), but in the early years of Piye's reign, he extended his rule to Thebes itself.

There, he had his sister, Amenirdis I, named as the successor of Shepenwepet I, who had the title, God's Wife of Amun. Shepenwepet I was the sister of Rudamun of the Theban 23rd Dynasty, and apparently both Rudamun and Piye were recognized at Thebes at the same time. After the death of Rudamun, the Theban royal line seems to have abandoned Thebes in favor of Hierakleopolis, where Peftjauawy-bast, the last king of his dynasty remained an ally of Piye.

Soon, Piye was given a reason to intervene further north. Tefnakhte (a Lybian), the Prince of Western Egypt based in the Delta city of Sais extended his control south by taking the city of Memphis, as well as the old Middle Kingdom of Itj-tawy (Lisht).

At first, Piye merely checked Tefnakhte's movement south with a pair of naval battles in Middle Egypt, though he left the Saite rulers in control of the North. However, after spending New Years in Nubia, Piye returned to Thebes in time for the great Opet Festival, and subsequently set about taking the remainder of Egypt under his control. His troops moved north, capturing three towns, and killing one of Tefnakhte's sons in the process.

Soon, Piye attacked the city of Ashmunein which was ruled by Nimlot, once an ally of Piye. Using wooden siege towers, the city fell after five months.

Further North, Hierakleopolis, ruled by Piye's loyal ally, King Peftjauawybast, had been threatened by Tefnakhte, but the capture of Nimlot relieved the pressure on Hierakleopolis, and soon Piye had control of every major center south of Memphis, as well as capturing another of Tefnakhte's sons.

The only real obstacle left for Piye was Memphis, the ancient capital of Egypt. While the city was heavily fortified and defended, as well as the water of the Nile protecting its walls, Piye was able to use the masts of boats and ships in the Memphite harbor to assault the city and scale the walls. In very short order, Memphis too was brought under his control. It is said that his first act was to protect the temple of Ptah, and then to go there himself to be anointed and to worship.

With the capture of Memphis, most of the Delta rulers soon yielded to the Kushite king. One notable exception was Tefnakhte, who even went so far as to mount another, but unsuccessful campaign against Piye. Finally, he submitted to Piye's rule of Egypt, taking an oath of loyalty.

After conquering Egypt, Piye simply went home to Nubia, and to our knowledge, never again returned to Egypt. He is portrayed as a ruler who did not glory in the smiting of his adversaries, as did other kings, but rather preferred treaties and alliances. He left the rule of the country largely in the hands of his vassals, but recorded his victories on a stela (called the Victory Stela, now in the Egyptian Museum) at Napata. He left few monuments in Egypt, other than an expansion of the Temple of Amun at Thebes (current day Luxor). Later, Tefnakhte would again claim kingdom and as the founder of the 24th Dynasty, rule at least the western Delta.

However, later successors to Piye would consolidate their control over Egypt, at least for a time.

Upon Piye's death, he was buried at El-Kurru, where he erected a small pyramid resembling the tall, narrow structures that had been built above many private tombs of Egypt's New Kingdom.

Shebaka (Shabaka) - 712-698 BC

Shebaka is considered by some to be the first king of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty. During his reign, he undertook some building projects. The Fourth Pylon at Karnak has an inscription that tells of Shebaka's restoration of the gate. He also started work on the second pylon in front of the temple of Thutmose III at Medinet Habu. Shebaka's sister, Amunirdis I held a position that was very important politically as well as religiously. She was called "god's wife of Amun" at Thebes. Her funerary temple was at Medinet Habu and was in front of the temple of Ramesses III.

Shebitku - Shabataka - 698-690 BC

Shebitku was the second king of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty. He was the nephew and successor of Shebaka. During Shebaka's reign, there was a policy of conciliation and cooperation with the Assyrians. This kept the Assyrians from coming further into Egypt. Shebitku had a different policy; resistance. A stela from Kawa tells of Shebitku asking his brothers, including Taharqa, to come to him at Thebes from Nubia. The army went with Taharqa. On another stela that is the story told that when Jerusalem was under attack by the Assyrians, that the king of Ethiopia (Kush) came against Sennacherib (of Assyria). Shebitku joined in the resistance against Sennacherib and an Egyptian army was sent to Palestine, led by Shebitku's brother, Taharqa.

Taharqa - 690-664 BC

Taharqa was the brother of Shebitku and was the third king of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty. Shebitku died and Taharqa was crowned. Taharqa is responsible for building done both in Nubia as well as Egypt. He built the colonnade in the first court of the temple of Amun at Karnak. There is one column that stands twenty-one meters high and is still standing. During his reign, the Assyrians threatened Egypt once again. The Assyrians were successful in one invasion in which they captured Memphis, wounded Taharqa and stole his family and property. Taharqa survived the attack. It is thought that Taharqa died in 664 BC and was buried in his pyramid at Nuri near Napata.

Tantamani 664-657 BC



Tanwetamani (Assyrian Tandamane or Tantamani, Greek Tementes, also known as Tanutamun) was Egypt's last ruler of the 25th Dynasty as well as the last Nubain (Kushite) Ruler, ruling from about 664 to 657 BC. We are told his throne name was Ba-ka-re, meaning "Glorious is the Soul of Re". He succeeded Taharqa, though he was probably the son of that king's sister, queen Qalhata. His succession to the throne is recorded in a record known as the Dream Stela, not to be confused with that of Tuthmosis IV. It was discovered along with the Victory Stela of Piye at Gebel Barkal in 1862, and now resides in the Nubian Museum in Aswan.

Tanwetamani may have served as a co-regent with Taharqa, but his parentage and family relationships are difficult. From his stela we find depicted two women, one of whom is referred to as "the royal sister, the Mistress of Egypt, Qalhata", while the other is "the royal sister, the Mistress of Ta-Seti, Pi-(ankh)-Arty". An analysis of the text associated with the stela would seem to indicate that Qalhata was Tanwetamani's mother, while the second woman was his wife. The fact that Qalhata was his mother is also supported by her tomb at Nuri in the modern Sudan, where she is given the title of "King's Mother". Foundation deposits also show that the tomb was build during the reign of Tanwetamani.

Most recent histories which discuss the 25th dynasty identify Tanwetamani (Urdamani) as a son of Shabataka, Taharqa's brother, not of his uncle Shabaka as the Rassam cylinder annalist appears to suggest.. The errant orthography can be explained by the fact that the name Shabaka is more properly vocalized as Shebitku. If so then the "t" in the doubled consonant "tk" in the name of Shebitku would easily be lost to a foreign ear. The annalist wrote what he heard and recorded Shabataku instead of Shabitku.

In the narrative of his stela, the king is referred to as "lord of valor like Montu, great of strength like a fierce-eyed lion". It goes on to explain that in the first year of his reign, Tanwetamani had a dream of two serpents, one on his right hand and one on his left. After waking, the king's advisors interpreted the dream, saying that, "the southland is already thin, seize the northland". Hence, he should bring Egypt back under control of the Kushite empire. After this passage, another states that Tanwetamani then "rose on the throne of Horus", a term which may be interpreted as his having ascended the throne. This is the primary evidence we have for his co-

regency with Taharqa, but we are also told that Assyrian text provides that he did not do so until after Taharqa's death.

We assume that at the time of his accession, Tanwetamani was most likely inside Egypt proper, for the text on the stela states that "he went from where he was to Napata (Nubia), and there was none who stood up to oppose him". Hence, he went to the Temple of Amun and was acknowledged as god and king.

Other text within the stela confirms that he was at this time in control of southern, or Upper Egypt, but at the very least was not in control of parts of the north. After ascending the throne, he went north from Nubia, first stopping at Elephantine where he participated in a festival procession of the God Khnum. From there he sailed further north to Waset (Thebes) where he once again participated in the festival.

Nekau of Sais may have been killed in this battle, but his son, Psamtek, who was loyal to the Assyrians fled to Asia. After this victory, Tanwetamani honored the God, Ptah-Sokar and his wife Sakhmet in the great temple of Memphis, and afterwards ordered the building of a chapel dedicated to Amun at Napata in Nubia. The temple, we know, was to be built of stone overlaid with gold, sections of cedar wood and the leaves of the door plated with electrum. This temple may be associated with parts of the great temple of Amun at Gebel Barkal.

Tanwetamani apparently spared the lives of the Delta princes, sending them home, but this victory was short lived.

The "door posts of the temple" may refer to the great gate of electrum erected by Tuthmosis IV and renewed by Shabaka. This attack on Thebes was one of the great tragedies of the ancient world, and was remembered by a Jewish prophet fifty years later.

Interestingly, Tanwetamani seems to have continued to be acknowledged as pharaoh in Thebes until his eighth year. There are inscriptions at Luxor that date the installation of priests by his name and the Kushites still maintained a large official presence in the city. Piye's daughter, Shepenwepet II we know as God's Wife of Amun, with Taharqa's daughter, Amenirdis II as her designated successor. Even in year none of Tanwetamani's reign, his cousin remained the High Priest of Amun, and we have other evidence of the Kushite's continued power within the region.

It is possible that Tanwetamani one again tried to assert control over Egypt, though the evidence is slight. In a brief passage in the work of Polyaeus from a 2nd Century (AD) text, we hear of a later battle near the temple of Isis at Memphis that may have involved Tanwetamani. He states that Psamtik, aided by Carian mercenary troops, defeated "Tementes". A few Egyptologist believe, based on a hellenistic Jewish source, that Tanwetamani may have even retaken Memphis, but much of this is conjecture.

In any case, Tanwetamani probably continued to rule in Nubia for at least a few more years, and was buried in the necropolis at Nuri.

26TH DYNASTY (657 - 525 BC)

Psammetichus I (Psam-tik) 664-610 BC



Psammetikhos I was the first ruler of the 26th Dynasty, though his reign overlaps that of the 25th Dynasty. We believe he ruled from about 664 through 610 BC. This is often referred to as the Saite period in Egyptian history, named for the power center of the Delta. It was not until Psammetikhos' ninth regnal year that he completely control Egypt. His birth name was Psamtik I, but he was known as Psammetichus I by the Greeks. His thrown name was Wah-ib-re, meaning "Constant is the Heart of Re" (Horus Name: Aib, Nebty Name: Neba, Bik-nub Name: Qenu).

Some Egyptologists place the 26th Dynasty in to Third Intermediate Period of Egypt's history, while others place it in the Late Period. Certainly, when Psammetikhos began his rule of Egypt, things were still chaotic, with various rulers claiming power. But Psammetikhos would consolidate his rule over Egypt, and reign for about a half a century, returning Egypt to stability.

Both Psammetikhos I and his father, Necho I of Sais were originally involved with an intrigue associated with the Kushite ruler, Taharqo against Assyria, but were then captured, held and indoctrinated by the Assyrians. Psammetikhos I was even given the Assyrian name, Nabu-shezibanni, before finally being returned to Egypt where his father assumed power in the Delta.

Upon the death of Necho in 664, Psammetikhos was recognized by his Assyrian overlords as King of Egypt, but this was a title at first without substance. He had rule over Memphis and Sais, but mostly the country was controlled by the old advisories of the Nubian Kings, who had been driven back to their own land. His was tasked with the responsibilities of controlling not only the unruly princes and petty kings of the Delta, but also to reconcile with the power center at Thebes.

Working with Thebes turned out to be easier than one might imagine, because he was able to align himself with the daughter of a great Theban nobleman named Mentuemhet. At that time, she held the title, "Adoratice of Amun" (God's Wife of Amun). He was able to insert his own daughter, Nitokris, as her successor. He was therefore able to effect both secular and religious ties that were to hold his growing presence in Egypt together, while he went after his Delta opponents. In order to do this, he raised a conscript army, as well as employing the services of mercenaries, many of whom were Greek, including Carians. This involvement with foreign mercenaries apparently caused some concern about their control within Egypt, and archaeological evidence suggests that sites such as Naukratis, among others, were established to facilitate this, along with offering Egypt an increased commercial presence within the Mediterranean world.

Psammetikhos also took as his principle wife Mehtemweskhet who was the daughter of Harsiese S, High Priest at Heliopolis, further cementing his rule.

To all appearances, Psammetikhos I had been a loyal subject of his Assyrian overlords, but as that empire's glories waned, Psammetikhos took his opportunity to break their hold, and in so doing became the absolute ruler of Egypt.

During the remaining four decades of Psammetikhos I's rule, he continued to consolidate his power and bring the country under complete unity, something Egypt had really not seen in a number of years. He undertook a number of building projects, including fortresses in the Delta at Naukratis and Daphnae, as well as at Elephantine. He also greatly expanded the Serapeum at Saqqara.

After consolidating Egypt, militarily, Psammetikhos I was mostly concerned with keeping Egypt's sovereignty strong. There were expeditions into northern Nubia probably to discourage any further ambitions of the Kushite kings. In the north east, Babylon had become such an important power that the king actually formed an alliance with his old masters in Assyria in order to combat Babylon's growing menace. This enabled Egypt to obtain control of the Palestinian coast. There were also actions required on the Libyan frontier in order to combat the threat posed by the fugitive Delta princes.

Psammetikhos I, as well as other kings of this dynasty, followed the archaistic tendencies of the previous dynasty in art, as well as in many customs, such as the formulation of their names. The renaissance in art is such that it is sometimes difficult to tell whether an artifact came from this period of time, or from the Old or Middle Kingdoms.

Psammetikhos I was succeeded by his son, Necho (Nekau) II, who continued to build on his father's accomplishments in Egypt.

Nekau (Necho) II 610-595 BC

Nekau (II), who we know better as Necho, was either the 2nd or 3rd king of Egypt's 26th Dynasty, depending on whether we allow the rule of a nominal king Nekau I at the beginning of the Dynasty. Nekau was his Birth name, and Necho is actually his

Greek name. His Throne name was Wah-em-ib-re, which means "Carrying out the Wish of Re Forever".

He came to the throne, succeeding his father, Psammetichus I in about 610 BC., and probably ruled Egypt until about 595 BC. He continued the foreign involvement of his father, and Palestine once more became an Egyptian possession. In fact, much of Egypt's involvement in that area is found in the Biblical account of the Book of Kings. Initially things went well for Necho II and we find the Egyptian forces campaigning east of the Euphrates river against the Chaldeans, defeating Josiah of Judah in 609 BC. at Harran. This allowed the Egyptians to establish themselves on the Euphrates for a short while, though apparently the Egyptians did not end up controlling that city. He then intervened in the kingdom of Israel and deposed Josiah's son Jehoahaz, replacing him with his brother Eliakim (Jehoiakim (II Kings 23: 29-35). Afterwards, we are told that Jerusalem paid tribute to Egypt. He also ruled Syria at least as far as Carchemish.

But this position was also soon lost, when in 605 BC, the king suffered a catastrophic loss. The son of the Babylonian king, Nabopolassar was sent to deal with Syria. This was Nebuchadnezzar, and he captured Carchemish from the Egyptians, and then pursued the fleeing army as far as Hamath, where he apparently overwhelmed them. Hence, this was followed by a retreat to by the Egyptians to their eastern frontier at Gaza.

Necho is known to have been responsible for monuments honoring the Apries Bull in Memphis. We also find inscriptional evidence of the king in the quarries of the Mokattam Hills.

But in many ways, Necho was a very foresighted individual who's vision included a "Suez Canal" almost 2,500 years prior to the modern construct. He had a navigable canal dug, using some 12,000 workers, through the Wadi Tumilat between the Pelusiac branch of the Nile (where the great frontier fortress of Pelusium was located) and the Red Sea. He caused a great port city, Per-Temu-Tjeku ("the House of Atum of Tjeku", modern Tell el-Mashkuta) west of modern Ismailia to be built on the canal, and like Suez later, its fortunes were inevitably linked with this new waterway. Tradition held that this was the Biblical city of Pithom, but recent excavations have shown this to be incorrect.

At this time, Greece was expanding her trading contacts and Necho took the opportunity to recruit displaced Ionian Greeks to form an Egyptian Navy. This was, militarily, revolutionary, for the Egyptians had an inherent distaste for and fear of the sea. While this new navy was probably not much threat to his rivals, it did lead to other benefits, such as the creation of a new African trade route. He also encouraged some Greek settlement in the Delta.

When Necho II died in 595 BC., he left behind a son and three daughters. His son, Psammetichus II, only ruled for a brief period - 595-589.



The King commonly referred to as Apries (his Greek name), who's birth name was Wah-ib-re, meaning "Constant is the Heart of Re" and who's Throne name was Haa-ib-re, meaning "Jubilant is the Heart of Re Forever", succeeded his father, Psamtik II in February of 589 BC., of Egypt's 26th Dynasty. We believe he ruled Egypt until his defeat at the hands of Amasis in 570 BC. Some sources provide that Apries was the Biblical Hophra.

Herodotus claimed that the wife of Apries was called Nitetis, but there appears to be no contemporary sources evidencing her name. We are also told that in the fourth year of his reign, he managed to have Ankhnesneferibre, apparently the daughter of Psammetichus II, adopted as the successor of Nitigret for the title, God's Wife of Amun.

He did build, as all Egyptian kings felt was their duty, in locations such as the temples at Athribis (Tell Atrib), in the Bahariya Oasis, at Memphis and Sais.

He continued a foreign policy of his father of intervention in Palestinian affairs, but was plagued with a number of military problems at home and abroad. He addressed himself vigorously to a Chaldaean problem that had plagued his predecessors, initially operating on a large scale basis against them in conjunction with the Phoenician cities and Zedekiah of Judah. However, this ended up being a disaster and possibly caused an invasion of Egypt in the late 580s BC. However, he also conducted some well conceived campaigns against Cyprus and Phoenicia between 574 and 570 BC.

However, during his reign, a strategically important military garrison of native Egyptian troops at Elephantine (modern Aswan) mutinied, though that was contained.

His worse nightmare transpired after he sent his Egyptian native army to help Libya against the Dorian Greek invaders (against the Greek city of Cyrene), they were badly beaten, and upon the survivor's return, civil war broke out. Apries was blamed for this disaster, resulting in a confrontation between the regular Egyptian army (the machimoi) and foreign mercenaries (Greek) under his command.

Actually, the defeat at Cyrene probably only provided an excuse for the revolt. For sometime, the mercenaries under his command had been treated considerably better than the native Egyptian army. When Apries sent his general, Amasis (Ahmose II) to put down the revolt, instead he was implored by the Egyptians instead to be their leader, a plea which he accepted.

The history of what followed this is somewhat difficult. Various sources actually give considerably different accounts. However, it appears that a messenger arrived to tell Apries of Amasis' treason, and was abruptly killed for his bad news. Now according to almost all accounts, the Greek mercenary troops of Apries under his command advanced on the native Egyptian army. They may have met in the northwest Egyptian Delta in around January or February of 570 BC at a location called Momemphis. Afterwards, many sources provide conflictive information, but it appears Apries probably survived this first battle, though his army was defeated and he was forced to retreat. He may have fled the country, but most sources indicate that he returned to his palace at Memphis, where he may have continued to control a part of Egypt. However, for a somewhat different account of these events, see our section on Amasis (Ahmose II).

Regardless, most sources provide that his body was treated with respect by Amasis. The new king allowed the remains of Apries to be transported to Sais, where he was buried with full royal honors.

Only one definite statue of the king survives, though there are several others, including one that might also be attributable to Amasis, that may be of that of Apries.

Amasis 570-526 BC



Amasis who was probably the 5th ruler of Egypt during the 26th Dynasty, has been called the last great Egyptian Pharaoh. This is because the rule of his son, Psammetichus III, was very short lived, and in fact even in the last days of Amasis' life the Persians were already advancing on Egypt. They were the overwhelming power of the region, and would control Egypt up until Alexander the Great's conquest

of Egypt, and the ensuing Greek rulers. After his son, never again would an Egyptian rule ancient Egypt.

Amasis was actually the king's Greek name. His birth name was Ahmose II, which means "The Moon is Born, Son of Neith". His throne name was Khnem-ib-re, meaning "He who embraces the Heart of Re". We believe he ruled Egypt between 570 and 526 BC. We believe that Amasis was the son of a Lady Takheredeneset, and married two women by the names of Tentheta and Nakhtsebastetru. He may have had a third wife named Khedebneithireretbeneret, who was actually a daughter of his great nemesis, Apries. He had a number of children by the first two wives, including his successor, Psammetichus III. Another child we specifically know of was General Ahmose, who, along with his mother Nakhtsebastetru, were buried in tomb LG 83 at Giza. A daughter, Nitokris II, may have come to Thebes for adoption as prospective God's Wife. If so, she was probably the daughter of Khedebneithireretbeneret, because the current God's Wife, Ankhesenneferibre, was a sister of Apries.

From Herodotus, we learn that he was a likeable, popular ruler who is said to have had such a strong inclination for drink that he sometimes delayed state matters in order to indulge in a drinking bout.

However, he did not ascend the throne easily, nor was he in line to do so. We first know of Amasis as a general in Nubia under Psammetikhos I. It would seem that his predecessor, Apries, undertook several military campaigns, but his last against the Greek city of Cyrene ended in disaster. Apries was blamed for the failure, and so a revolt broke out.

In reality, the defeat at Cyrene was really only an excuse for this revolt by Egyptian troops. For some time, the Greek mercenaries within the Egyptian army, who were probably treated better than the Egyptians themselves, were apparently the subject of jealousy and contempt by the native Egyptian elements.

Actually, Amasis, as a general in the Egyptian army, was sent to put down the revolt of the machimoi (the native Egyptian soldiers), but instead the soldiers proclaimed him as Pharaoh.

When word reached Apries of Amasis' treason, he slaughtered the messenger and proceeded to advance on the forces of Amasis. By this late date in Pharaonic history, Apries' army was mostly made up of Aegean mercenaries. The two armies met somewhere in the north-west Egyptian Delta in about January or February of 570 BC, and Apries was forced to retreat.

However, this did not give Amasis complete control of Egypt. Apries's apparent retreat was only as far south as Memphis and he continued to control southern Egypt, while Amasis established himself at Sais in Northern Egypt. Yet Apries was not content with this, and aided by his Greek troops, once again marched on Amasis in October of 570 BC, where he was once again defeated by his former general. With this defeat, Apries could only find safety abroad, and he eventually turned up in the court of Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Now, Amasis took control of a united Egypt. This was complete when sometime between October 19th and December 9th of 570 BC, Thebes submitted to his reign.

Yet poor Apries was not yet finished. In March of 567, he again marched on Egypt at the head of a Babylonian army, but once again, Amasis defeated him, this time capturing the former king. It seems that Amasis allowed Apries to live for a short time, however.

Apparently, Amasis still held some respect for his former ruler, because he buried Apries with kingly honors in the royal necropolis at Sais. This may very well be explained if indeed Amasis was married to Apries' daughter. However, various sources differ somewhat on these events. For an alternative version, see our section on Apries.

Now as the ruler of all Egypt, Amasis took on the traditional role of builder, and is attested to by quarry inscriptions at Tura and Elephantine, and with building projects at Memphis, including two granite colossi and a temple of Isis, Philae, Elephantine, Edfu, Sohag, Abydos, Koptos, Karnak and any number of Delta sites, including his tomb at Sais. While we have never discovered this tomb, again Herodotus steps in to describe it for us:

(It is) a great cloistered building of stone, decorated with pillars carved in the imitation of palm-trees, and other costly ornaments. Within the cloister is a chamber with double doors, and behind the doors stands the sepulchre."

This was really a very prosperous time for Egypt. We are told that agriculture, always the backbone of Egypt, met a spectacular level of success, and Herodotus again tells us that the number of inhabited cities in Egypt reached as high as 20,000.

After consolidating his power, Amasis was apparently somewhat weary of the Greeks, who had been around since the beginning of the Dynasty, and of course, fought against him on the side of Apries. Psammetikhos I had encouraged the Greek merchants in the city of Naukratis, and Amasis consolidated them in that area only. This made for easier control of these merchants, and created a lucrative income for the crown in the form of taxes.

Prior to Apries' defeat, the Greek mercenaries were established in camps between Babastis and the sea on the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, where Herodotus tells us they had remained for over a century. Apparently, he first moved them to Memphis, where he could keep an eye on things.

But, Amasis was not willing to push the Greeks too far because he needed their alliance against the expanding threat of the Persians, as well as an attempted invasion by the Chaldaeans. Apparently after this unsuccessful invasion, he formed an alliance with the Chaldaeans, Croesus of Lydia and Sparta.

Unfortunately, the Persians destroyed the alliance by first capturing Lydia in 546 and then the Chaldaeans. So instead, he cultivated his relationship with the Aegean world, extending his foreign relationships to include Cyprus. He is said to have even financed the rebuilding of the temple of Apollo at Delphi after its destruction in 548 BC. According to archaeological records, he probably even allowed the Greek soldiers to return their old mercenary camps. Regrettably, for all his efforts, the Persians would eventually prove too ambitious to stop.

By the time of Amasis' death after a long reign of some 44 years, the Persians had long ago conquered Babylon, and were already at the frontiers of Egypt. His son was eventually captured by the Persians, and Herodotus tells us that the Persian ruler Cambyses had Amasis's mummy exhumed, and:

"subjected to every indignity, such as lashing with whips and the plucking of its hairs, until the executioners were weary. At last, as the corpse had been embalmed and would not fall to pieces under the blows, Cambyses ordered it burnt."

Psammetichus III 526-525 - No information is available.

27TH DYNASTY (525 - 404 BC)



With the conquest of Egypt, the Persian kings became pharaohs, constituting the 27th and 31st dynasties. Cambyses appointed a satrap, Aryandes, who ruled Egypt, Kyrene and Barca from Memphis. Economically the country formed an important part of the empire, being its breadbasket (as it was to be Rome's). It paid the highest tribute of all the Persian satrapies, 700 talents of silver. (Cilicians were taxed 500 talents as were the Lydians, Ionians and Carians 450, Phrygians 350 and Phoenicia, Cyprus and Palestine another 350.) Moreover it was responsible for the upkeep of the occupying army.

Cambyes 525-522 BC



Cambyes was the first ruler of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty. He was the ruler of Persia and treated the last ruler of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty, Psammetichus III (Psamtik III) with some consideration. Psammetichus then tried to revolt and Cambyes caused him to be killed. There is an inscription on a statue that tells of Cambyes going to Sais to worship Neith and restore the revenues and festivals of the temple. But according to Herodotus, Cambyes did many reprehensible things against Egyptian religion and customs and eventually went mad.

In 525 BC the Persian emperor Cambyes II, son of Cyrus the Great, who had already named his son as king of Babylon though Cambyes II resigned that position after only one year, invaded Egypt and successfully overthrew the native Egyptian pharaoh, Psamtek III, last ruler of Egypt's 26th Dynasty to become the first ruler of Egypt's 27th Persian Dynasty. His father had earlier attempted an invasion of Egypt against Psamtek III's predecessor, Amasis, but Cyrus' death in 529 BC put a halt to that expedition.

The empire of Cyrus passed to his son Cambyes (530-522 BC), who was as savage and ugly of temper as Cyrus had been mild and generous. The father had conquered Asia, the son undertook the conquest of Africa. Having skillfully and successfully led his army across the deserts which separate the two continents, Cambyes met and defeated the Egyptians in front of their city at Pelusium in 525 BC just a few weeks after the death of Pharaoh Amasis of the 19th/26th Dynasty when Psammetichus II was king. Cambyes captured Pelusium by using a clever strategy. The Egyptians regarded certain animals, especially cats, as being sacred, and would not injure them on any account. Cambyes had his men carry the 'sacred' animals in front of them to

the attack. The Egyptians did not dare to shoot their arrows for fear of wounding the animals, and so Pelusium was stormed successfully. After the taking of the city Cambyses seized the opportunity to show his contempt of the Egyptians. He himself carried a cage of cats in front of him upon his horse, and hurled them with insulting taunts and laughter, in to the faces of his foes.



After capturing Egypt, Cambyses took the Throne name Mesut-i-re (Mesuti-Ra), meaning "Offspring of Re". Though the Persians would rule Egypt for the next 193 years until Alexander the Great defeated Darius III and conquered Egypt in 332 BC, Cambyses II's victory would bring to an end (for the most part) Egyptians truly ruling Egypt until the mid 20th century, when Egypt finally shrugged off colonial rule.

We know very little about Cambyses II through contemporary texts, but his reputation as a mad tyrannical despot has come down to us in the writings of the Greek historian Herodotus (440 BC) and a Jewish document from 407 BC known as 'The Demotic Chronicle' which speaks of the Persian king destroying all the temples of the Egyptian gods. However, it must be repeatedly noted that the Greeks shared no love for the Persians. Herodotus informs us that Cambyses II was a monster of cruelty and impiety.

Herodotus gives us three tales as to why the Persians invaded Egypt. In one, Cambyses II had requested an Egyptian princess for a wife, or actually a concubine, and was angered when he found that he had been sent a lady of second rate standing. In another, it turns out that he was the bastard son of Nitetis, daughter of the Saite (from Sais) king Apries, and therefore half Egyptian anyway, whereas the third story provides that Cambyses II, at the age of ten, made a promise to his mother (who is now Cassandane) that he would "turn Egypt upside down" to avenge a slight paid to her. However, Ctesias of Cnidus states that his mother was Amytis, the daughter of the last king of independent Media so we are really unsure of that side of his parentage. While even Herodotus doubts all of these stories, and given the fact that his

father had already planned one invasion of Egypt, the stories do in fact reflect the later Greek bias towards his Persian dynasty.

Regardless of Cambyses II's reason for his invasion of Egypt, Herodotus notes how the Persians easily entered Egypt across the desert. They were advised by the defecting mercenary general, Phanes of Halicarnassus, to employ the Bedouins as guides. However, Phanes had left his two sons in Egypt. We are told that for his treachery, as the armies of the Persians and the mercenary army of the Egyptians met, his sons were brought out in front of the Egyptian army where they could be seen by their father, and their throats were slit over a large bowl. Afterwards, Herodotus tells us that water and wine were added to the contents of the bowl and drunk by every man in the Egyptian force.

This did not stop the ensuing battle at Pelusium, Greek pelos, which was the gateway to Egypt. Its location on Egypt's eastern boundary, meant that it was an important trading post as well and also of immense strategic importance. It was the starting point for Egyptian expeditions to Asia and an entry point for foreign invaders.

Here, the Egyptian forces were routed in the battle and fled back to Memphis. Apparently Psamtek III managed to escape the ensuing siege of the Egyptian capital, only to be captured a short time afterwards and was carried off to Susa in chains. Herodotus goes on to tell us of all the outrages that Cambyses II then inflicted on the Egyptians, not only including the stabbing of a sacred Apis bull and his subsequent burial at the Serapeum in Saqqara, but also the desecration and deliberate burning of the embalmed body of Amasis (a story that has been partly evidenced by destruction of some of Amasis' inscriptions) and the banishment of other Egyptian opponents.

The story of Cambyses II's fit of jealousy towards the Apis bull, whether true or simply Greek propaganda, was intended to reflect his personal failures as a monarch and military leader. In the three short years of his rule over Egypt he personally led a disastrous campaign up the River Nile into Ethiopia. There, we are told, his ill-prepared mercenary army was so meagerly supplied with food that they were forced to eat the flesh of their own colleagues as their supplies ran out in the Nubian desert. The Persian army returned northwards in abject humiliation having failed even to encounter their enemy in battle.

Then, of course, there is also the mystery of his lost army, some fifty thousand strong, that vanished in the Western Desert on their way to the Siwa Oasis along with all their weapons and other equipment, never to be heard of again. Cambyses II had also planned a military campaign against Carthage, but this too was aborted because, on this occasion, the king's Phoenician sea captains refused to attack their kinsfolk who had founded the Carthaginian colony towards the end of the 8th century BC. In fact, the conquest of Egypt was Cambyses' only spectacular military success in his seven years of troubled rule over the Persian empire.

However, we are told that when the Persians at home received news of Cambyses' several military disasters, some of the most influential nobles revolted, swearing allegiance to the king's younger brother Bardiya. With their support, the pretender to

the great throne of Cyrus seized power in July 522 BC as Cambyses II was returning home.



The story is told that, on hearing of this revolt, and in haste to mount his horse to swiftly finish the journey home, Cambyses II managed to stab himself in the thigh with his own dagger. At that moment, he began to recall an Egyptian prophecy told to him by the priests of Buto in which it was predicted that the king would die in Ecbatana. Cambyses II had thought that the Persian summer capital of Ecbatana had been meant and that he would therefore die in old age. But now he realized that the prophecy had been fulfilled in a very different way here in Syrian Ecbatana.

Still enveloped in his dark and disturbed mood, Cambyses II decided that his fate had been sealed and simply lay down to await his end. The wound soon became gangrenous and the king died in early August of 522 BC. However, it should be noted that other references tell us that Cambyses II had his brother murdered even prior to his expedition to Egypt, but apparently if it was not Bardiya (though there is speculation that Cambyses II's servants perhaps did not kill his brother as ordered), there seems to have definitely been an usurper to the throne, perhaps claiming to be his brother, who we are told was killed secretly.

Cambyses II

Modern Egyptologists believe that many of these accounts are rather biased, and that Cambyses II's rule was perhaps not nearly so traumatic as Herodotus, who wrote his history only about 75 years after Cambyses II's demise, would have us believe. In reality, the Saite dynasty had all but completely collapsed, and it is likely that with Psamtek III's (Psammetichus III) capture by the Persians, Cambyses II simply took

charge of the country. The Egyptians were particularly isolated at this time in their history, having seen their Greek allies defect, including not only Phanes, but Polycrates of Samos. In addition, many of Egypt's minorities, such as the Jewish community at Elephantine and even certain elements within the Egyptian aristocracy, seem to have even welcomed Cambyses II's rule.



A depiction of Cambyses II worshipping the Apri Bull

The Egyptian evidence that we do have depicts a ruler anxious to avoid offending Egyptian susceptibilities who at least presented himself as an Egyptian king in all respects. It is even possible that the pillaging of Egyptian towns told to us by Greek sources never occurred at all. In an inscription on the statue of Udjahorresnet, a Saite priest and doctor, as well as a former naval officer, we learn that Cambyses II was prepared to work with and promote native Egyptians to assist in government, and that he showed at least some respect for Egyptian religion. For example, regardless of the death of the Apri Bull, it should be noted that the animal's burial was held with proper pomp, ceremony and respect. Indeed, Cambyses II continued Egyptian policy regarding sanctuaries and national cults, confirmed by his building work in the Wadi Hammamat and at a few other Egyptian temples.



The statue recording the autobiography of Udjahorresnet

Udjahorresnet goes on to say in his autobiography written on a naophorous statue now in the Vatican collection at Rome, that he introduced Cambyses II to Egyptian culture so that he might take on the appearance of a traditional Egyptian Pharaoh.

However, even though Cambyses II had his name written in a kingly Egyptian cartouche, he did remain very Persian, and was buried at Takht-i-Rustam near Persepolis (Iran). It has been suggested that Cambyses II may have originally followed a traditional Persian policy of reconciliation in the footsteps of their conquests. In deed, it may be that Cambyses II's rule began well enough, but with the his defeats and losses, his mood may very well have turned darker with time, along with his actions.

We do know that there was a short lived revolt which broke out in Egypt after Cambyses II died in 522 BC, but the independence was lost almost immediately to his successor, a distant relative and an officer in Cambyses II's army, named Darius. The dynasty of Persian rulers who then ruled Egypt did so as absentee landlords from afar.



The unfinished tomb of Cambyses II in Iran

The Lost Army of Cambyses II

Within recent years all manner of artifacts and monuments have been discovered in Egypt's Western Desert. Here and there, new discoveries of temples and tombs turn up, even in relatively inhabited areas where more modern structures are often difficult to distinguish from ancient ruins. It is a place where the shifting sands can uncover whole new archaeological worlds, and so vast that no more than very small regions are ever investigated systematically by Egyptologists. In fact, most discoveries if not almost all are made by accident, so Egypt antiquity officials must remain ever alert to those who bring them an inscribed stone unearthed beneath a house, or a textile fragment found in the sand.

Lately, there has been considerable petroleum excavation in the Western Desert. Anyone traveling the main route between the near oasis will see this activity, but the exploration for oil stretched much deeper into the Western Desert. It is not surprising that they have come upon a few archaeological finds, and it is not unlikely that they will come across others. Very recently, when a geological team from the Helwan University geologists found themselves walking through dunes littered with fragments of textiles, daggers, arrow-heads, and the bleached bones of the men to whom all these trappings belonged, they reported the discovery to the antiquity service.

Mohammed al-Saghir of the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) now believes that this accidental find may very well be at least remnants of the mysterious Lost Army of Cambyses II, and he is now organizing a mission to investigate the site more thoroughly. If he is successful and the discovery is that of Cambyses II's 50,000 strong lost army, then it will not only answer some ancient mysteries, but will probably also provide us with a rich source of information on the Persian military of that time, and maybe even expand our knowledge of Cambyses II himself.

The Persian armed forces consisted of many elements, including companies of foreign mercenaries such as Greeks, Phoenicians, Carians, Cilicians, Medes and Syrians. Hence, if this is not another false lead, we may expect excellent preservation of helmets, leather corselets, cloth garments, spears, bows, swords and daggers a veritable treasure trove of military memorabilia. The rations and support equipment will all be there, ready for detailed analysis.

However, it should be noted that some Egyptologists question the very existence of such an army, rather believing that the whole affair was simply a fable told by a very prejudiced Greek.

Yet if true, Cambyses II probably sent his army to Siwa Oasis in the Western Desert to seek (or seize) legitimization of his rule from the oracle of Amun, much as Alexander the Great would do in the 4th century BC. However, the army was overtaken by a sandstorm and buried. For centuries adventurers and archaeologists have tried to find the lost army, and at times, tantalizing, though usually false clues have been discovered.

Legitimizing his rule does not fully explain the need for taking such a large army to the Siwa Oasis. Accounts and other resources provide that the priests of the oracle were perhaps posing a danger to Cambyses II's rule, probably encouraging revolt among the native Egyptians. Perhaps the priests felt slighted that Cambyses II had not immediately sought their approval as Alexander the Great would do almost upon his arrival in Egypt. Therefore, it is likely that Cambyses II intended to force their legitimization of his rule. In fact, some sources believe that his intent was to simply destroy the Oasis completely for their treachery, while it is also known that the army was to continue on after Siwa in order to attack the Libyans.

Yet the Siwa Oasis, the western most of Egypt's Oases, is much deeper into the desert than others, such as Bahariya, and apparently, like many of Cambyses II's military operations, this one too was ill conceived. Why he so easily entered Egypt with the help of the Bedouins, and then sent such a large force into the desert only to be lost is a mystery.

We know that the army was dispatched from the holy city of Thebes, supported by a great train of pack animals. After a seven day march, it reached the Kharga Oasis and moved on to the last of the near Oases, the Bahariya, before turning towards the 325 kilometers of desert that separated it from the Siwa Oasis. It would have been a 30 day march through burning heat with no additional sources of water or shade.

According to Herodotus (as later reported to him by the inhabitants of Siwa), after many days of struggle through the soft sand, the troops were resting one morning when calamity struck without warning. "As they were at their breakfast, a wind arose from the south, strong and deadly, bringing with it vast columns of whirling sand, which buried the troops and caused them utterly to disappear." Overwhelmed by the powerful sandstorm, men and animals alike were asphyxiated as they huddled together, gradually being enveloped in a sea of drift-sand.

It was after learning of the loss of his army that, having witnessed the reverence with which the Egyptians regarded the sacred Apis bull of Memphis in a ceremony and believing he was being mocked, he fell into a rage, drew his dagger and plunged it into the bull's calf. However, it seems that he must have later regretted this action, for the Bull was buried with due reverence.

Cambyses left no heirs, and Darius I, one of his generals, fought his way to sovereignty against many rivals.

Darius I 520-486 BC



Darius I - Darius The Great - was the second ruler of the Twenty-seventh Dynasty. He was king of Persia in 522-486 BC, one of the greatest rulers of the Achaemenid dynasty, who was noted for his administrative genius and for his great building projects. Darius attempted several times to conquer Greece; his fleet was destroyed by a storm in 492, and the Athenians defeated his army at Marathon in 490.

Ascension to monarchy

Darius was the son of Hystaspes, the satrap (provincial governor) of Parthia. The principal contemporary sources for his history are his own inscriptions, especially the great trilingual inscription on the Bisitun (Behistun) rock at the village of the same name, in which he tells how he gained the throne. The accounts of his accession given by the Greek historians Herodotus and Ctesias are in many points obviously derived from this official version but are interwoven with legends.

According to Herodotus, Darius, when a youth, was suspected by Cyrus II the Great (who ruled from 559 to 529 BC) of plotting against the throne. Later Darius was in Egypt with Cambyses II, the son of Cyrus and heir to his kingdom, as a member of the royal bodyguard. After the death of Cambyses in the summer of 522 BC, Darius hastened to Media, where, in September, with the help of six Persian nobles, he killed Bardiya (Smerdis), another son of Cyrus, who had usurped the throne the previous March.

In the Bisitun inscription Darius defended this deed and his own assumption of kingship on the grounds that the usurper was actually Gaumata, a Magian, who had

impersonated Bardiya after Bardiya had been murdered secretly by Cambyses. Darius therefore claimed that he was restoring the kingship to the rightful Achaemenid house. He himself, however, belonged to a collateral branch of the royal family, and, as his father and grandfather were alive at his accession, it is unlikely that he was next in line to the throne. Some modern scholars consider that he invented the story of Gaumata in order to justify his actions and that the murdered king was indeed the son of Cyrus.

Darius did not at first gain general recognition but had to impose his rule by force. His assassination of Bardiya was followed, particularly in the eastern provinces, by widespread revolts, which threatened to disrupt the empire. In Susiana, Babylonia, Media, Sagartia, and Margiana, independent governments were set up, most of them by men who claimed to belong to the former ruling families. Babylonia rebelled twice and Susiana three times.

In Persia itself a certain Vahyazdata, who pretended to be Bardiya, gained considerable support. These risings, however, were spontaneous and uncoordinated, and, notwithstanding the small size of his army, Darius and his generals were able to suppress them one by one. In the Bisitun inscription he records that in 19 battles he defeated nine rebel leaders, who appear as his captives on the accompanying relief. By 519 BC, when the third rising in Susiana was put down, he had established his authority in the east.

In 518 Darius visited Egypt, which he lists as a rebel country, perhaps because of the insubordination of its satrap, Aryandes, whom he put to death.

Fortification of the empire

Having restored internal order in the empire, Darius undertook a number of campaigns for the purpose of strengthening his frontiers and checking the incursions of nomadic tribes. In 519 BC he attacked the Scythians east of the Caspian Sea and a few years later conquered the Indus Valley.

In 513, after subduing eastern Thrace and the Getae, he crossed the Danube River into European Scythia, but the Scythian nomads devastated the country as they retreated from him, and he was forced, for lack of supplies, to abandon the campaign.

The satraps of Asia Minor completed the subjugation of Thrace, secured the submission of Macedonia, and captured the Aegean islands of Lemnos and Imbros. Thus, the approaches to Greece were in Persian hands, as was control of the Black Sea grain trade through the straits, the latter being of major importance to the Greek economy.

The conquest of Greece was a logical step to protect Persian rule over the Greeks of Asia Minor from interference by their European kinsmen. According to Herodotus, Darius, before the Scythian campaign, had sent ships to explore the Greek coasts, but he took no military action until 499 BC, when Athens and Eretria supported an Ionian revolt against Persian rule.

After the suppression of this rebellion, Mardonius, Darius' son-in-law, was given charge of an expedition against Athens and Eretria, but the loss of his fleet in a storm off Mount Athos (492 BC) forced him to abandon the operation. In 490 BC another force under Datis, a Mede, destroyed Eretria and enslaved its inhabitants but was defeated by the Athenians at Marathon. Preparations for a third expedition were delayed by an insurrection in Egypt, and Darius died in 486 BC before they were completed.

Darius as an administrator

Although Darius consolidated and added to the conquests of his predecessors, it was as an administrator that he made his greatest contribution to Persian history. He completed the organization of the empire into satrapies, initiated by Cyrus the Great, and fixed the annual tribute due from each province. During his reign, ambitious and far-sighted projects were undertaken to promote imperial trade and commerce.

Coinage, weights, and measures were standardized and land and sea routes developed. An expedition led by Scylax of Caryanda sailed down the Indus River and explored the sea route from its mouth to Egypt, and a canal from the Nile River to the Red Sea, probably begun by the chief of the Egyptian delta lords, Necho I (7th century BC), was repaired and completed.

While measures were thus taken to unite the diverse peoples of the empire by a uniform administration, Darius followed the example of Cyrus in respecting native religious institutions. In Egypt he assumed an Egyptian titulary and gave active support to the cult. He built a temple to the god Amon in the Kharga oasis, endowed the temple at Edfu, and carried out restoration work in other sanctuaries.

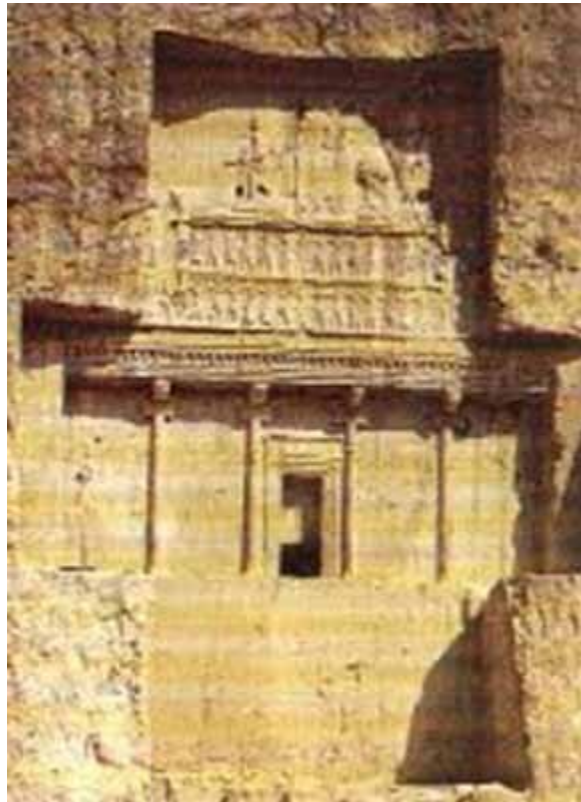
He empowered the Egyptians to reestablish the medical school of the temple of Sais, and he ordered his satrap to codify the Egyptian laws in consultation with the native priests. In the Egyptian traditions he was considered as one of the great lawgivers and benefactors of the country. In 519 BC he authorized the Jews to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem, in accordance with the earlier decree of Cyrus. In the opinion of some authorities, the religious beliefs of Darius himself, as reflected in his inscriptions, show the influence of the teachings of [Zoroaster](#), and the introduction of Zoroastrianism as the state religion of Persia is probably to be attributed to him.

Darius was the greatest royal architect of his dynasty, and during his reign Persian architecture assumed a style that remained unchanged until the end of the empire. In 521 BC he made Susa his administrative capital, where he restored the fortifications and built an audience hall (apadana) and a residential palace.

The foundation inscriptions of his palace describe how he brought materials and craftsmen for the work from all quarters of the empire. At Persepolis, in his native country of Fars (Persis), he founded a new royal residence to replace the earlier capital at Pasargadae.

The fortifications, apadana, council hall, treasury, and a residential palace are to be attributed to him, although not completed in his lifetime. He also built at Ecbana and Babylon.

Darius died while preparing a new expedition against the Greeks; his son and successor, Xerxes I, attempted to fulfill his plan.



Tomb of Darius

Xerxes I Pharaoh, The Great (486-466 BC)



Xerxes I, detail of a bas-relief of the north courtyard in the treasury at Persepolis, late 6th -early 5th century BC

Xerxes I - (Xerxes the Great) (𐎧𐎫𐎼𐎷𐎡𐎴) - was the third ruler of the Twenty-seventh Dynasty. His name in Old Persian is Khshayarsha, in the Bible Ahasuerus.

Xerxes became king of Persia at the death of his father Darius the Great in 485, at a time when his father was preparing a new expedition against Greece and had to face an uprising in Egypt. According to Herodotus, the transition was peaceful this time.

Because he was about to leave for Egypt, Darius, following the law of his country had been requested to name his successor and to choose between the elder of his sons, born from a first wife before he was in power, and the first of his sons born after he became king, from a second wife, Atossa, Cyrus' daughter, who had earlier been successively wed to her brothers Cambyses and Smerdis, and which he had married soon after reaching power in order to confirm his legitimacy. Atossa was said to have much power on Darius and he chose her son Xerxes for successor. When his father died, in 486 BC, Xerxes was about 35 years old and had already governed Babylonia for a dozen years.

One of his first concerns upon his accession was to pacify Egypt, where a usurper had been governing for two years. But he was forced to use much stronger methods than had Darius. In 484 BC he ravaged the Delta and chastised the Egyptians.

Xerxes then learned of the revolt of Babylon, where two nationalist pretenders had appeared in swift succession. The second, Shamash-eriba, was conquered by Xerxes' son-in-law, and violent repression ensued: Babylon's fortresses were torn down, its temples pillaged, and the statue of Marduk destroyed; this latter act had great political significance.

Xerxes was no longer able to "take the hand of" (receive the patronage of) the Babylonian god. Whereas Darius had treated Egypt and Babylonia as kingdoms personally united to the Persian Empire (though administered as satrapies), Xerxes acted with a new intransigence.

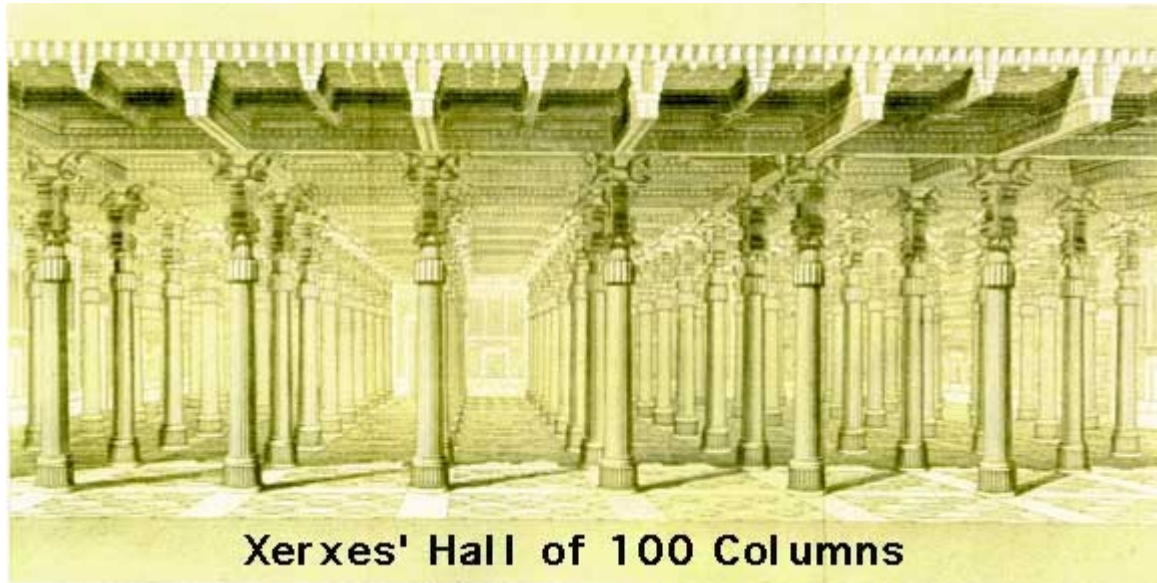
Having rejected the fiction of personal union, he then abandoned the titles of king of Babylonia and king of Egypt, making himself simply "king of the Persians and the Medes." It was probably the revolt of Babylon, although some authors say it was troubles in Bactria, to which Xerxes alluded in an inscription that proclaimed: "And among these countries (in rebellion) there was one where, previously, daevas had been worshipped. Afterward, through Ahura Mazda's favour, I destroyed this sanctuary of daevas. Let daevas not be worshipped. There, where daevas had been worshipped before, I worshipped Ahura Mazda."

Xerxes thus declared himself the adversary of the daevas, the ancient pre-Zoroastrian gods, and doubtlessly identified the Babylonian gods with these fallen gods of the Aryan religion. The questions arise of whether the destruction of Marduk's statue should be linked with this text proclaiming the destruction of the daeva sanctuaries, of whether Xerxes was a more zealous supporter of Zoroastrianism than was his father, and, indeed, of whether he himself was a Zoroastrian.

It is said that the slaves' lives were much harder during the time of Xerxes. It is not certain whether this is true since Xerxes was much more involved elsewhere and paid little attention to Egypt.

During his reign he put down uprisings in both Egypt and Babylon, but his efforts to invade Europe were thrown back by Greece in 480.

Xerxes was assassinated in 465 BC. Some believe that it was his son who had him assassinated, but there is no proof.



Xerxes' Hall of the 100 Columns is the most impressive building in the Persepolis Complex. jumble of fallen columns, column heads, and column bases.



The Gate of Xerxes at Persepolis shows that the Winged Lion was placed at the corner of one entrance. When you stood in front of the gate you saw a lion with four legs and when you were inside the gate you also saw a lion with four legs.

Artaxerxes I 465-424

The king of ancient Persia (464-425 BC), of the dynasty of the Achaemenis. Artaxerxes is the Greek form of iArdashir the Persian. He succeeded his father,

Xerxes I , in whose assassination he had no part. The later weakness of the Persian Empire is commonly traced to the reign of Artaxerxes, and there were many uprisings in the provinces.

The revolt of Egypt, aided by the Athenians, was put down (c.455 BC) after years of fighting, and Bactria was pacified. The Athenians sent a fleet under Cimon to aid a rebellion of Cyprus against Persian rule.

The fleet won a victory, but the treaty negotiated by Callias was generally favorable to Persia. Important cultural exchanges occurred between Greece and Persia during Artaxerxes' reign. He was remembered warmly in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah because he authorized their revival of Judaism.

Darius II (424-404 BC)

Darius II was the fifth king of the Twenty-seventh Dynasty. 404 B.C., king of ancient Persia (423?404 B.C.); son of Artaxerxes I and a concubine, hence sometimes called Darius Nothus [Darius the Bastard].

His rule was not popular or successful, and he spent most of his reign in quelling revolts in Syria, Lydia (413), and Media (410).

He lost Egypt (410), but through the diplomacy of Pharnabazus, Tissaphernes, and Cyrus the Younger he secured much influence in Greece in the Peloponnesian War.

Artaxerxes II succeeded Darius, but the succession was challenged by Cyrus the Younger.

During his reign, he did some work on the temple of Amun in the Kharga oasis.

There were also many foreigners in Egypt during this time, mostly Greeks and Jews.

He died in the spring of 404 BC.

28TH DYNASTY

Amyrtaios (Amyrteos) 404-399 B.C.

Amyrtaios was the only ruler of the Twenty-eighth Dynasty. He is thought to have been a Libyan. He ruled Egypt from Sais for six years. He began his reign after the death of Darius II when there was a renewed revolt in Egypt. They achieved independence for a short time again. On the Elephantine Papyri, there is documentation of a loan contract that is written in the year 5 of this king. This is indication that he was recognized in Upper and Lower Egypt. He must have driven the Persians out of the whole country.

29TH DYNASTY (399 - 380 BC)

Nepherites I 399-393

Nepherites I was the first ruler of the Twenty-ninth Dynasty. Nepherites I sent a gift to the Spartans after an allegiance had been entered into with Sparta against Persia. This gift was lost to the Persians after the ships from Egypt approached Rhodes. The Egyptians did not know that the Rhodians had defected to the Persians.

Psammuthis 393

No information available.

Hakoris - Hakor - Achoris - Hagor - 393-380 BC

There is some discrepancy as to whether Hakoris was the second or the third king of the Twenty-ninth Dynasty. Psammuthis is the king in which the confusion is associated with because he is shown to have ruled during the same year as Hakoris (393 BC). Hakoris reigned for thirteen years and built many monuments which are found in all parts of Egypt. During his reign there was peace between Persia and Sparta. Persia was free to move against Egypt and there was a three-year war between the two. Egypt was relatively strong during this time and became allies with Cyprus. Egypt was delivered from Persia. The tomb of Hakoris has not been found.

Nepherites II 380 -

Nepherites II was the fourth and final ruler of the Twenty-ninth Dynasty. He reigned for only four months before he was overthrown by the founder of the Thirtieth Dynasty. He assumed the throne after the death of Hakoris, who was Nepherites' father. The name Nepherites has an etymological meaning of "His great ones are prosperous".

30TH DYNASTY (380-343 BC)

The 30th Dynasty contains the last of the Egyptian-born Pharaohs.

Nectanebo I - Nectanebus - Nakhthorhebe - 380-362 B.C.

Nectanebo I was the first ruler of the Thirtieth Dynasty and was a general from Sebennytus. He is thought to have been related to the family of Nepherites I. He imposed heavy taxes on the people of Egypt in order to conquer Syria from Persia. In the spring of 373 BC, the Persian army moved in to attack Egypt. They got as far as the Mendesian mouth of the Nile. Two of the commanders of the Persian forces could not agree on their strategy. As the time passed, the Nile rose and flooded the Delta

area. The Persians abandoned their efforts and left. The Egyptians had successfully turned back the Persians, with a little help from the Nile, and peace was established. Nectanebo restored and built many monuments throughout Egypt. 380-362

Teos - Tachos - Djeho - 365-360

Teos was the second ruler of the Thirtieth Dynasty and was the son of his predecessor, Nectanebo I. After his father had died, Teos took over the throne and planned an attack on the Persians. He had the help of mercenaries from Greece, but his own generals disagreed with his leadership and the entire event was a fiasco. He was deserted by both the Greeks and the Egyptians. He fled to Persia by way of Arabia and Artaxerxes II, the ruler of Persia, gave him refuge. He lived in Persia until his death.

Nectanebo II - Nectanebus - Nekhthorhebe - 360-343 BC



Nectanebo II was the third and final ruler of the Thirtieth Dynasty. He became king after Teos' campaign into Persia which was a disaster. Teos had fled to Persia and Nectanebo returned to Egypt as Pharaoh. Nectanebo ruled for eighteen years and built many monuments in Egypt.

Much of Nectanebo's reign was peaceful and there was a final flowering of the local Egyptian arts. Statues were erected at Abydos and Bubastis, a granite temple was built at Horbeit in the Delta and bas-reliefs were carved at Karnak with a purity of style comparable to that of the Saite renaissance.

After the disaster with the Persians, Nectanebo II risked no further expeditions against the Syrians or the Palestinians. However, the Persians did attempt to subdue Egypt and this time succeeded. Cyprus and Phoenicia were also fighting against the Persians and were assisted with some troops from Nectanebo II.

Artaxerxes III (Persian) destroyed these troops and moved against Egypt. This time the Nile flooding had already passed and the Persian attack was made much more

wisely that the last attack (Nectanebo I). The attack was made at three different points at the same time. Nectanebo II retreated to Memphis where he thought he would make a stand against the Persians. But, as city after city fell, he gathered up as much of his possessions as he could and fled to Ethiopia.

Artaxerxes razed fortifications, desecrated temples and plundered the treasury. He appointed Pherendares as satrap of Egypt and returned to Babylon laden with treasures.

SECOND PERSIAN PERIOD (343-332 B.C.)

31ST DYNASTY (380-343 BC)

The 31st Dynasty is also known as the Second Persian Period and was added after Manetho created his list of kings..

Ochus (Artaxerxes III) 343-338

Ochus was the first ruler of the Thirty-first Dynasty. He was the king of Persia for twenty years when the Persians defeated the Egyptians and Ochus became ruler over Egypt. He was the son of Artaxerxes II. He ruled over Egypt for six years. He was murdered in 338 BC by his own commander Bagoas in the summer of 338 BC.

Arses - 360-343 BC

Arses was the second ruler of the Thirty-first Dynasty and was the youngest son of Ochus. After Ochus was murdered, Arses succeeded him and ruled until he was murdered in 336 BC by his commander Bagoas.

Darius III Codomannus 335-332

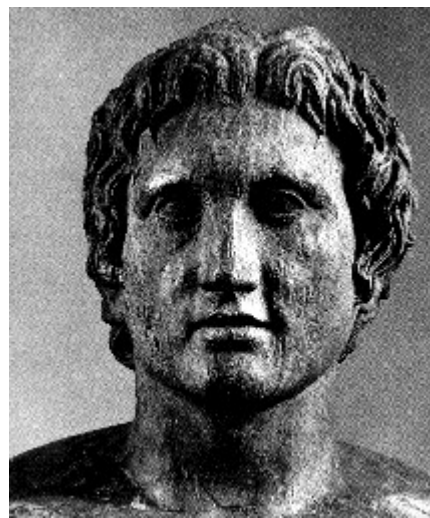
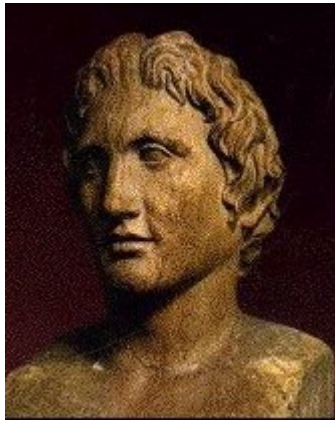


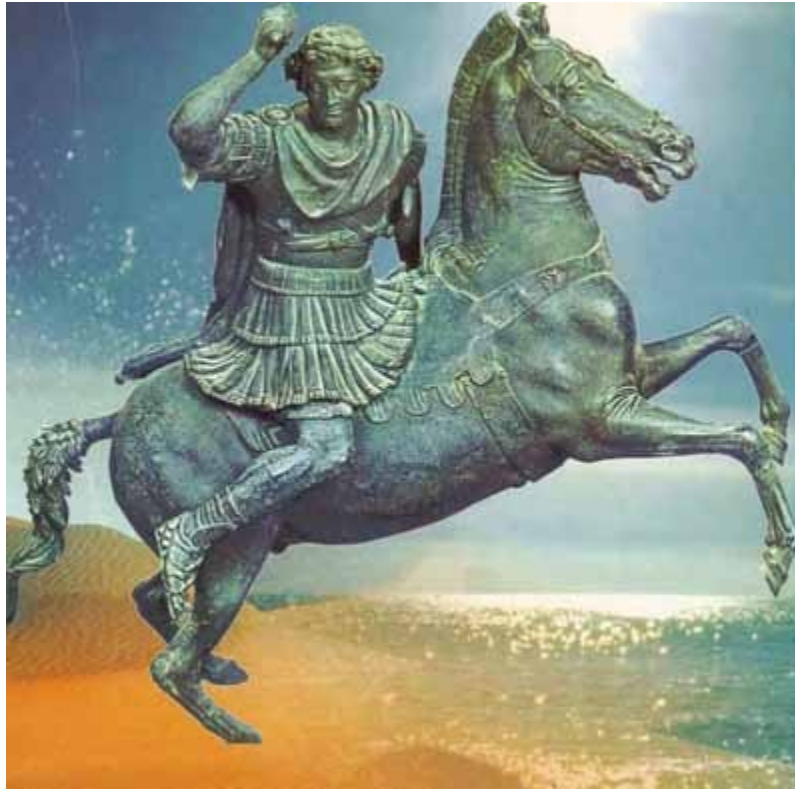
Darius III - king of ancient Persia. A cousin of Artaxerxes III, he was raised to the throne by the eunuch Bagoas, who had murdered both Artaxerxes and his son, Arses; Darius in turn murdered Bagoas. His rule was not stable, however. When Alexander the Great invaded Persia, Darius was defeated in the battle of Issus (333 BC) and again in the battle of Gaugamela near Arbela (331 BC). For the first time Persia was confronted by a united Greece, and Darius' greatest error was in underestimating Alexander's strength. Darius used the wrong tactics in battle and was forced to flee to Ecbatana and then eastward to Bactria. It was there that the satrap of Bactria, Bessus, had Darius murdered on Alexander's approach and took command himself in the unsuccessful opposition to the Macedonian conqueror. These events brought the Persian Empire to an end and marked the beginning of the Hellenistic period in the E Mediterranean. Darius III is probably the Darius the Persian mentioned in the Bible (Neh. 12.22).

GRECO-ROMAN PERIOD (332 B.C. - 395 A.D.)

Macedonian Kings - Alexandria

Alexander the Great 332-323





The Egyptians, oppressed under the Persian rule, welcomed Alexander the Great with open arms when he entered the country in 332 B.C. While there he visited the Oracle of Amon, at Siwa, where he was declared "the son of Amon." Exactly how this happened is unclear. One story is that either upon entering or exiting the temple he was greeted by the priest as "my son." Alexander's army and followers were not in a strategic position to see the priest and thought the words came from the god himself. However it happened, from that point on Alexander was instated as a son of god, like the pharaohs of old. Alexander initiated the building of Alexandria, but never lived to see the city. He left Egypt in 331 B.C. and left Cleomenes of Naukratis in charge of the territory. This position was later claimed by Ptolemy. When Alexander died, Ptolemy's generals divided the kingdom.